

# EVIDENCE

OF

## MR. JAS. W. ROBERTSON

AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY COMMISSIONER

BEFORE

THE SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

## AGRICULTURE AND COLONIZATION

20th and 21st FEBRUARY, 1896

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# CANADA AS A FOOD PRODUCING COUNTRY.

COMMITTEE ROOM 46, HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
Thursday, 20th February, 1896.

The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization met at 10.30 o'clock a.m., this day, Mr. Sproule, Chairman, presiding.

Mr. JAS. W. ROBERTSON, Agricultural and Dairy Commissioner, was present by request, and on invitation addressed the Committee as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I have been invited this morning to give some information on the exportation of perishable food products from Canada, that I might lead up to an explanation of the plan which is proposed for adoption by the Government to improve the methods of exporting—meats and other foods. You will allow me a few minutes to state how this country stands in its capacity and adaptation for the production of perishable food products, in comparison with other countries that compete with us. It is admitted by everybody that the sure way to increase the wealth of a country and to promote its prosperity is for its people to realize on their natural resources, through intelligent skilful labour. The natural resources of Canada are mainly those which can be realized upon through agriculture. The resources of all countries may be classified as, first, those which are inexhaustible, such as soil, climate, and water supply. Fertility of the soil is different from the soil itself; the former is a resource which may be exhausted. Secondly there are exhaustible resources which are not restorable, such as the coal fields, natural gas, and the supply of minerals which once exhausted cannot be restored. Again there are exhaustible resources which may be restored but which are liable to deterioration, such as the supply of fish in our lakes and streams and the supply of water in our rivers,—for water power may be lessened by the denudation of the hillsides of their trees, and the consequent irregularity of drainage and of rainfall. Moreover there are resources which are exhaustible and are still capable of restoration, with improvement and increase by use. Among these are the resources of fertility of soil, building materials, available labour, and educational attainments on the part of the people. These while easily exhaustible, can still be improved and increased by use. Coming to point out the resources that Canada possesses for the production of perishable food products, let me use this chart for a moment to show that, for the production of such fine food products as will give Canadian farmers a fair and good chance with their competitors in other countries, we have excellent resources:

Soil,	} Plants.	} Domestic	} Cost of	} Profits.
Climate,				
Water Supply,				
Building Materials,				
Available Labour,	} quality	} Animals	} Products	
"				
"	} cost			
Markets.				
			Prices.	

In soil Canada has no superior among all the countries where the people follow farming for a living; but fertility of soil is not always a source or assurance of wealth to the people who live on it. I shall use only one illustration to make my meaning clear with reference to that. The people who dwell on the Delta of the Nile live on the richest soil I think, that lies anywhere under the sun; and they are among the poorest of people who follow the tilling of land for their living. Even with the fertility of the land of Egypt the people stay poor, chiefly because they have not realized upon other available resources, mainly perhaps that of intelligent labour as applied to their calling. We in Canada have a climate which is admirably adapted for growing very

large quantities of such plants as are suitable for the cheapest production of cattle products. I don't know any land superior to Canada in that regard. Other countries can grow plants that we cannot produce with success at all, but I don't know any that can produce under the influence of its climate and soil, plants that will yield larger quantities of cattle products per acre with a larger margin of profit to the people who produce them. Our water supply is fairly reliable in nearly all parts of the Dominion. These resources enable us to grow fodder plants economically, and with the added resource of available and cheap building materials, they enable us to add to the growing of the plants, the feeding of domestic animals with profit. I need only mention that the provinces that lie eastward of Lake Huron are perhaps better off than the prairie provinces of the Dominion, in possessing plenty of building materials easily available for the shelter of cattle during the period of the year when they must be housed in some comfortable way. Then we have a resource in available labour, which is improving in quality every year. It needs much further improvement. The labour of the Canadian farmers has been certainly characterized by diligence and every kind of forceful persistence under difficulties; but it has not been of that order until recently in most sections that enabled the people to turn out fine food products. It was largely concerned with the production of grain, fodder and primitive products, by means of labour which was not of a high quality in regard to the experience required to turn out fine food products well and cheap. You will allow me to use one illustration in order to get the minds of the members of the Committee in sympathy with my own in viewing this matter. I would not be using a disparaging word about myself in saying that the available labour I have, is of a very poor quality as applied to the work of blacksmithing. I would burn a great deal of coal, waste iron, and make clumsy shoes. I have no available labour of high quality, for that class of work; but that does not mean that I cannot do other things very well. The farmers in the past have had ability of high order for the work they had to do; but not of good quality, or high order for such work as they have to do now and will have to do in the future.

The labour has been of such a nature that the cost has been comparatively low in proportion to the price of the products, mainly because in the production of the things which we have been selling and exporting, we have applied a great deal of horse power and have used labour-saving machinery. Thus, we reduced the cost, so far as the labour element was concerned, that entered into the cost of our products.

#### PROFIT BETWEEN COST OF PRODUCTS AND SELLING PRICES.

Now, I come to the point that bears directly on the subject of my address to you this morning,—the exportation of fine food products from Canada. No matter how well the farmers may do their work, and no matter how excellent the quality of products they may have for disposal, the profits after all will depend on two things, the cost of those products to themselves, and the prices which they can obtain for those products from the markets to which they are sent. I think the farmers of Canada are in the way of reducing the cost of their products as low as they can be brought. I think our farmers are applying as much of labour-saving skill by the use of the best of methods to the making of what they have to sell, as any farmers are. I think, however, there is still a great loss of possible profit to the farmers of Canada, and also to the men who handle the farmers' products, by the obstructions, obstacles, and difficulties that stand between the producer and consumer in the interchange of commodities,—that stand between the cost of the product to the farmer and the price paid by the ultimate consuming buyer, that unreasonably reduce the profits or wages of the producer, and at the same time unnecessarily increase the price to the consumer.

#### LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

It may be said there is no use inviting the farmers to go on producing more butter or more cheese, or more beef, or more mutton, or more bacon, or more eggs, or more fruit, unless there is a market for those things, not merely at some price, but at a price

which will pay the man who produces them, fairly well for his labour. If the price of these products can be raised, you can at once increase the production.

That is the law of supply and demand; not merely a demand for a product at some price, but a demand at such a relatively high price as will leave the man who produces, satisfactory returns for his labour and his capital. Then, the demand itself depends upon two things. It depends, I think, largely upon excellence of quality, and then on relative cheapness or lowness of price. If everybody in Ottawa could get strictly fresh laid eggs during the winter at 20 cents a dozen they would use that kind, instead of eating other eggs at 15 or 16 cents a dozen; and the demand would be so greatly increased that there would be no possibility of overstocking the market at that price. Excellence of quality would make a larger consumption per head by present customers, and lowness of price would lead the common people to eat what only the rich can now afford. And therein lies, I think, a great deal for the Canadian farmers to examine;—whether they could not get the large class of consumers of high priced foods in England to prefer our fine food products, and so get for a portion of our exports somewhat near the prices paid by the wealthy classes for very dainty food. The production will respond to relatively high prices or profits. Just so soon as the profits increase, just so quickly is there a great enlargement in the production. Let me give an illustration. The high class consumers of beef in Great Britain pay rather more than a shilling a pound for the best cuts, eight pence a pound for the second cuts, and four pence for the third class of cuts of their beef. They often pay higher prices than these, but as far as I can learn that is a moderate average for the very best quality of beef. That leaves an average equal to 17 cents a pound, by the carcass, after allowing for the loss in weight in the retailing of the pieces. In figuring out the actual cost of retailing beef and leaving a wide margin for profit, I find a retailer could sell beef with an excellent revenue for himself if he had clear a cent and a half per pound, after allowing for the loss in weight in cutting up. That is a profitable business. I have allowed nearly a hundred per cent above the actual cost of wages and rent. As the business is done now, it costs a little less than two cents a pound of dressed beef in Great Britain, to pay all the expenses of shipping cattle alive from Montreal, slaughtering them on the other side, refrigerating them there, and selling them on commission. The actual cost during the past year, reckoned on the net weight of beef from animals shipped alive, was rather less than 2 cents a pound from Montreal outwards. Allowing the retailer what I call a liberal margin for his services in this business, and counting the cost for transportation, killing, etc., at what it actually cost last year, the total charges incurred in conveying the live cattle from Montreal and the beef from them to the consumer would be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents a pound of beef. Taking the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents from 17 cents, which is the average price paid by the best class of consumers in Great Britain, leaves  $13\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound, which, it seems to me, might be available for the farmers of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec for the very best quality of beef.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. That is on the dressed meat?—A. Per lb. on dressed beef by the carcass. I say available to the farmers, because the hides and the offal and the tallow should pay all the charges for freight from the farmers' places to Montreal. I am reckoning the business as it is now run, with expenses as charged on live cattle.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. Do I understand you to say  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents is what the actual cost would be delivered in Great Britain from Montreal?—A. Yes, from Montreal to the consumers.

*By Mr. Macdonald, (Assiniboia) :*

Q. That is the retailers' profit?—A. No; one and a-half cents would meet the expenses of the retailer. I shall tell you how I reached these figures.



*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. Just excuse me a moment. Do I understand this 2 cents pays the freight and all the costs to the Old Country, including slaughtering?—A. Yes. The 2 cents per lb. was got at in this way: I have copies of some account sales of cattle actually shipped last year from Montreal by Hon. Senator Cochrane. I took the freight charges, the selling charges, the lairage charges, the killing charges, the refrigerating charges and the commission charges, and reckoning the sum of them on the dressed beef, the actual cost was rather less than 2 cents per lb. I arrived at the  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb. expenses of the retailer by getting information as to how many men were required in a shop to cut up so many animals. Then I made a liberal allowance for rent and labour, added nearly 100 per cent to that, and called it what the retailer might be entitled to charge, after allowing for loss of weight in cutting up. From 6 to 7 per cent is a liberal allowance for the actual loss in weight when the carcasses are bought wholesale and sold retail to customers. I have not allowed anything for the expenses from the farmers' places to Montreal, but on the other hand I have not reckoned in the  $13\frac{1}{2}$  cents a lb., anything of revenue from hide, tallow or offal, although that would quite meet the actual expense of carriage of cattle from farms to Montreal. I figured on shipments of 280 cattle, and the hides, offal and fat amounted in one case to an average of \$11.76 per head, and in the other case to an average of \$11.81 per head at Liverpool. I do not think these would fetch more than two thirds of that amount in Montreal at first.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. That is the carcass?—A. That is the hide, tallow and the offal,—\$11.76 and \$11.81 cents per carcass. That is to illustrate the point I was making, that if the farmers of Canada came anywhere near getting  $13\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb. dressed weight for beef in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the production would be enormously increased. I am not saying they could get that—that I am going to discuss in a moment—I am stating what the retail market prices are, and the necessary expenses. If we could get the sum of the retail prices for our farmers less the actual necessary expenses and reasonable profits of the middlemen—carriers and merchants—the production of cattle would be enormously and speedily increased.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. How did the prices compare with last year?—A. The prices of cattle last year were not higher than for the average of three or four years. I have not figured that out accurately, because I do not happen to have the figures for 1892 and 1893.

*By Mr. Cargill :*

Q. Supposing you got an animal that would net 500 lbs. dressed meat at  $13\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb. at Montreal, it would be equal to \$67.50 for the carcass. What would that animal be worth, on its feet before being slaughtered?—A. Last year at the prices cattle were sold at, such an animal would not have fetched more than about \$43 to \$45. That is at last year's prices, but if the carcass could be sent through this route, with the obstructions removed, then it would sell live weight for just as much as it would fetch as dressed meat.

#### THE BRITISH MARKET FOR FOOD PRODUCTS.

The English are good customers for food products; of all people who purchase food they are the best. They are the customers of the world, for the nations of the world that produce a surplus of food products. I have looked over the map and the returns of the British Board of Trade and I find nearly every civilized country is a competitor for a place in the British markets. Denmark, Germany, France, the United States, and all the rest of them are engaged in a most strenuous, and merciless though peaceful, competition for the best place in her markets. If you want to pursue that point further, there are Spain, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and nearly all other countries

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whose people are civilized that send foods to England. I find very few exceptions; the British take either fruits, cereals, meats or other animal products from them.

*By Mr. Gillmor:*

Q. Is there any reason for that? A. Yes; because England has found a most valuable resource in the skilled labour of her mechanics, and manufacturers.

Q. There is no obstruction in getting into the British markets?—A. England buys from whoever sends her the best quality of what she wants at the lowest price. There is one peculiarity, in this connection, that I may mention. The British are great sticklers in the old country for respectability in name, as to the food products they buy and eat. The English purchaser will not buy equally good food from two countries at the same price unless the food bears an equally respectable name. The purchaser over there is guided a good deal by the names of things; he has got into the habit of buying in that way. I once went into a shop over there and found the best Canadian cheese selling at 6d. per lb., while the best Scotch cheddar was selling at 10d. per lb. at the same counter; and yet the Canadian cheese was superior in quality, flavour, appearance and nourishing properties. That was 14 years ago, when the name of Canadian cheese was not as good as it is now. You can now get Canadian cheese offered under its own name and there is no discounting it on that account. But in other things it is not so, as for instance, in beef and meat products. The meat which sells best in the retail shops is labelled "best Scotch." I do not know that it is raised and fed on Scotch farms; possibly a good deal of it is brought up and reared as far west as Calgary, in our own Northwest country, and acquires the good name of "best Scotch" when it reaches the hands of the retailer who handles it.

#### TRANSPORTATION CHARGES.

Before passing on to the next chart let me refer to the opinion which has prevailed in the minds of a great many of our people, that distance from market was the great obstacle to successful admission to the British markets, and also that the great absorber of profits was the circumstance of being so far away from market. I have made some examination of that question and do not find that distance bears any special relation to the cost of transportation. Those of you, who have studied political questions in the larger sense, will remember a remark made once about the British farmer that he would be sufficiently protected always by the circumstance that his competitors had to pay the freight on the goods which they sent in from abroad. Now, the freight charges on our fine food products are a very small proportion of their value to the farmers here. I am going to base my statement on the prices the farmers here realize, and not on the prices the consuming purchasers pay, on the other side of the Atlantic. The actual freight charges on cheese shipped from Ontario and Quebec, where the most of our supplies go from, do not exceed 5 or 6 per cent of the value of the cheese as sold at the factories. That is the total cost for freight charges between the nearest shipping station in Ontario and Quebec and the ports of London, Liverpool, Bristol and Glasgow. I doubt very much if the English and Scotch farmers or dairymen get their cheese carried to the markets for more than one or two per cent less than we do. I have not at hand the details of transportation charges in Great Britain, but I have enough information to show that the average cost of freight over there will be nearly 3 per cent of the value of their cheese, while the average cost of ours is about 5 per cent. In that respect Canadian farmers are not far behind their English and Scotch competitors.

*By Mr. Cochrane:*

Q. Freight over there is much higher than ours?—A. It is much more per mile per ton. The average freight charges on our creamery butter before cold storage was put on did not exceed  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to us, and with cold storage it would not exceed 4 per cent, on the value of the product at the station of shipment, from Ontario and Quebec to Great Britain.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. Do you mean to say the charges on our butter are only 4 per cent of its value ?  
—A. The whole charges for transportation. I am not speaking of charges for commission, etc.; I am speaking simply about transportation services and charges.

The average transportation expenses on live cattle, from stations in Ontario and Quebec to the ports of landing in Great Britain, have been from 25 to 30 per cent of their value at the point of shipment. The great obstacle which has hindered us from getting the best class of customers, and the high prices paid by them in Great Britain, is not distance, but deterioration in quality during transit. Deterioration of quality is not a necessary factor in distance or in length of time. It has been so with us, and this is why we have been hindered from getting relatively higher prices, and the best class of buyers from being our regular customers.

#### VALUE OF COLD STORAGE.

Perishable food products are not valued according to their nourishing properties. They are valued mainly according to their daintiness of flavour. That is the quality that brings a high price. If a man were to value peaches according to their intrinsic value for nourishment as a food, he would never pay the prices that they are sold at from time to time. Daintiness of flavour is the quality that will gain for us the best class of customers at the highest prices the market will afford. It becomes necessary, therefore, to send not merely nourishing food products, but those having a dainty flavour. These need to be preserved during transportation and while waiting for a profitable demand. While I don't want to enter into any lengthy discussion this morning, on the shipment of butter and cheese, I want to show what is possible in the transportation and cold storage service, while keeping a perishable food product for what might be called a better market. Last summer, in my capacity as Dairy Commissioner, I ran a creamery at Moose Jaw, out in the middle of the North-west Territories. We had a rather insufficient refrigerator at the creamery in the early part of the season; because it was not built early enough, our early made butter could not be kept as cold as it ought to have been. The market out there was exceedingly dull in June, July and August, and prices were very low, from 14 to 15 cents. I held that butter at the creamery as best we could under these rather unfavourable circumstances, it being a new venture there with respect to our refrigerator. I shipped over 500 boxes of it to Montreal before the end of August. I sold 100 boxes then in Montreal at the very top market price, which was 18 cents a pound, for the latest made butter in the lot. I put the remainder of that butter, made in May, June, July, and in the early part of August, into a refrigerator warehouse in Montreal. Many reasons kept me from selling that butter about November or December. Then I carried out my original intention without saying much to anybody, thinking I would see how that butter would compare in Great Britain with other butter that had not been so treated. I shipped the June and July butter to Manchester in boxes.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. Was it sent in a refrigerator car?—A. Yes, it was sent in a refrigerator car from Moose Jaw to Montreal, but from Montreal to Manchester it went without refrigeration as it was winter time and quite cold.

I did not play any deception on anybody. I sent it simply as Canadian creamery butter. It was complained of as being a little stale in flavour. That was because the refrigerator was not complete at first. I ordered it to be sold at once. The price, as compared with what I might have got in Montreal, is no guide, because the market might go up or down; but being sold simply on its own merits, the prices ranged from 95 up to 108 shillings a hundred weight, or an average of 100 shillings a hundred weight. I took the Grocer's Gazette of London, England, of that date and looked at the highest quotations of butter. The quotations there are usually a little higher than

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the sales, so as to attract butter to the market. On that same week the quotations in Manchester for the very finest Danish butter were from 115 to 118 shillings, so that the very best Danish butter sent in, fresh made, fetched only 10 shillings a hundred weight more than some of our butter made in June. Choicest Colonial butter coming in from Australia and New Zealand was selling at from 106 to 110 shillings, or the very finest butter coming in refrigerator compartments, fresh made, was only 2 shillings a hundred weight or  $\frac{1}{2}$  a cent a pound more than some of our butter made in June and sold in January. All I want to demonstrate is this, that in these perishable food products we can keep the quality intact without great expense, and then we can meet our competitors in the English market with quality as good as theirs. At the same time, fine Danish butter in casks was selling at from 108 to 112 shillings a hundred weight, and the finest American from 88 to 96 shillings a hundred weight. I took all the quotations from the Grocer's Gazette.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. What is the weight of their cask?—A. 112 lbs. They are almost like our old firkins, but they are not headed in on the top.

Q. Just wood?—A. Yes.

Q. The butter placed next to the wood?—A. No; they are lined with parchment paper or butter cloth—nearly all with parchment paper. I was pointing out that the highest quotation for the finest American butter was 96 shillings, and some of our Moose Jaw butter reached 108 shillings and sold all through at an average of 100 shillings a hundred weight.

*By Mr. Macdonald (Assiniboia) :*

Q. This Moose Jaw butter was in boxes?—A. In 56 lb. boxes, square and lined with butter paper inside.

Q. Parchment paper?—A. Yes. The boxes cost from 15 to 16 cents each at the factory where they are made.

Q. Was all the cream separated by separators or by deep setting?—A. A little by deep setting and some by hand power separators.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. You gathered the cream?—A. Not much, a little only. We took in milk and ran it through a centrifugal cream separator. Some patrons sent their cream by rail.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. Do you find it makes much difference, the composition of the package in which butter is sent to market?—A. It makes a difference to the appearance and preservation of butter. There is not much risk of tainting unless there is a strong odor from the package.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. You have no way of knowing whether you realized better prices on one month or the other?—A. Yes, I have the record. The prices vary, but there is not much difference in the average prices of the months of June and July. It was sold in small lots of two, three and four boxes at a time.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. I understood you to say last year that the month did not make much difference?—A. If the butter is once made fine it can be kept fine if it is held properly.

The imports of fine food products to Great Britain in 1894 are shown in the following table :—

BRITISH IMPORTS, 1894.		Value.
Animals living (for food).....	\$	44,237,455
Dressed meats.....		110,594,951
Butter.....		65,489,268
Margarine.....		14,818,075
Cheese.....		26,644,708
Lard.....		13,424,292
Milk (condensed and preserved).....		5,252,277
Poultry.....		2,340,246
Eggs.....		18,426,118
Fruit (apples, plums, pears, grapes).....		12,459,544
		<hr/>
		\$313,686,934

These ten items of England's bill for foods imported, come to over \$313,000,000. Let me make one remark before I leave this part of the subject, that while Canada sends to Great Britain a very large proportion of the cheese she imports, the cheese item in Great Britain's bill is one of the smaller items; and we might somehow and soon get a larger share of some of these bigger items. Of butter in 1894 we sent from Canada \$438,000 worth out of \$65,500,000 worth. We might also get a share of the item for condensed milk.

The difficulty in making any headway with that in Great Britain has been that condensed milks are a good deal like patent medicines in a way. They are bought in proportion to the advertising they receive. When the Nova Scotia company began to introduce their product a few years ago it met with no commercial success, because the advertising expenses were so heavy the company could not continue to meet them from the sales. If a few depots could be started in Great Britain where this product could be put before the public continuously, at a small cost for advertising they would soon recognize the excellence of the product, as they have recognized the excellence of our cheese, and thus we would get a good demand for condensed milk from Canada.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. There are dried peaches too, Professor?—A. Yes, but I included only these four fruits in this statement. That is a large available market, if the prices be such as to pay us. It is a question of what price we can get out of that market for the quantities we send.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE EGG TRADE.

In case I might not come to it again, let me make a remark here in regard to the item of eggs. I have given a statement of the relative position we were able to take with Moose Jaw butter, which had been kept fairly well. Now, Canadian eggs in Great Britain do not stand very well yet as compared with the eggs from France or the eggs even from Austria and from some of these other countries close by. The greatest drawback to the success of our egg trade has been, I think, that the egg merchants, as far as I can find out by inquiry, collect eggs perhaps once a week or twice a week from all customers and from all sorts of places. The egg-waggons bring in some eggs fresh from the nests, some from the farmers' houses and some from shops, where they had been in the sunlight of a window for ten days or more. Complaints in England are, that taking 120 eggs, 100 are fresh and 20 are stale—not rotten or decayed, but just stale—and that causes a lower price and less satisfaction for the whole lot. The result is the same as if a shipper of butter were to ship 100 packages of the finest creamery butter, and to put 20 packages of decently good dairy butter in the same style of package, and mix them all through the lot. There is not any butter in the lot that is bad, but the mixing

of the 20 packages of irregular ordinary butter with the finest creamery butter would lower the prices for the whole lot (hear, hear). It would be a fair way of encouraging the egg business if our merchants were induced to collect a quantity of eggs direct from the farm houses twice a week and have them branded as fresh laid. If this were done and the eggs put into cold storage and shipped that way, they would get to Great Britain in as fresh a condition as though they were only four days old. The difficulty has been in preventing the mixing of eggs that are a little stale with the fresh-laid eggs.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. Have you got the average price paid?—A. Of eggs?

Q. Yes.—A. No; but I can give you that at the next meeting. I think that the comparatively low prices that Canadian farmers are getting, compared with the prices that are paid for the best class of products in Great Britain itself, are due in a large measure to the inefficiency of the commercial agencies that exist in this country for handling our perishable food products (hear, hear).

*By Mr. Macdonald (Huron) :*

Q. Would not the extra labour entailed upon the egg men in collecting their eggs once a week counterbalance the additional price that would be realized for the more freshly laid eggs?—A. I do not think so, because I think perhaps two-thirds of the eggs are collected once a week. If more pains were taken to keep these separate, the extra cost would not be more than one-half cent a dozen, as far as I can figure out, and the price in England for strictly fresh-flavoured eggs would be nearly six cents a dozen higher than for mixed lots.

Q. Is it not the custom to put the eggs into a dark compartment and examine them with a light?—A. An egg that is decayed or advanced toward decay can be discerned, but an egg that is simply stale cannot be discerned. An egg begins to decay in, perhaps, two ways. It may decay for food purposes by hatching—decay is not a good word in that sense; but it may change unfavourably for food purposes by hatching. It is more likely to decay from the fermentations that are started at the pores that go through the shell. An egg may look ever so well when viewed by a candle, and still be slightly stale inside. The egg merchants detect whether they are fresh in flavour by breaking some, emptying the eggs out, and smelling the shells. If the odour is offensive they conclude the eggs are stale. It is, therefore, necessary not only to keep out the rotten, stale, or partly hatched eggs, but eggs that are just slightly stale from having lain ten days in the sunlight.

The following table shows the total number of animals which are available for food, and whence the supply may be obtained :—

THE WORLD'S LIVE STOCK.

	Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.
In the world . . . . .	298,873,657	534,848,924	102,172,224
United Kingdom . . . . .	11,207,554	31,774,824	3,278,030
Canada . . . . .	4,060,662	2,513,977	1,702,785
Australasia . . . . .	12,632,018	116,153,632	1,026,014
United States . . . . .	52,378,283	42,273,553	46,094,807

This chart was put up to illustrate whence Great Britain might obtain the food supplies of a fine sort which she needs. It is Australasia that we have more to fear in the competition with cheese and butter than any other quarter. The numbers of cattle there have been increased within the last eight years more than our whole stock. Their

increase in eight years has been over four millions of cattle, and they are going to be very formidable competitors of ours in cheese and butter products. In the United States there are large herds of cattle, sheep and swine. I point out this fact also that it is no wonder that the Australians can capture the English market for preserved and frozen mutton because they have such enormous flocks of sheep compared with any other country.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. But is the Australian mutton as good frozen as unfrozen?—A. Some of the frozen mutton that has been taken into the United Kingdom in the best condition has been eaten in London and connoisseurs have said it is just as good. I think in most of these cases the quality of the product, if the animals are perfectly healthy, is about equally good from any part of the world. There is a good deal of superstition about the so called exquisite flavour of meats being due to certain localities ; but my own observation convinces me, although certain reputations are attached to things because of the country they come from, things equally good sometimes come from other places.

*By Mr. McNeill :*

Q. That would be the same breed of sheep. For example, you would not compare a Southdown with a Cotswold?—A. Not at all, because in the breed you have an essential difference in the proportion of fat, of lean flesh, and other breed characteristics.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. A Southdown from Canada would be as good as a good Southdown from Australasia?—A. Yes, certainly. The only thing I can say about the quality of meats is this, it seems that the more robust the animal is—the better it is in general bloom of health—the nicer the flavour of the food from it will be.

*By Mr. McNeill :*

Q. With regard to the breed of sheep in Australasia, what are they generally? They breed sheep there generally for wool? A. They do. I have only seen carcasses that are comparatively small.

Great Britain obtains her supplies of dairy products from the countries shown hereafter :—

	Butter. Value.	Cheese. Value.
Total values of imports, 1894.....	\$65,489,268	\$26,644,708
	Quantity. Cwts.	Quantity. Cwts.
From Canada.....	20,887	1,142,104
United States.....	29,996	672,347
Denmark.....	1,102,493	.....
Australasia.....	292,097	54,375
France.....	424,645	52,969
Sweden.....	266,306	.....
Holland.....	165,157	298,693
Germany.....	137,755	.....
Other countries.....	135,499	45,657
Total.....	2,574,835	2,266,145

In this chart I have put a statement of the imports of butter and cheese into Great Britain. The total value of butter imports in 1894 was \$65,489,268, representing a total weight of 2,574,835 cwts.



*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. You mean the cwt. of 112 lbs? A. Yes.—The object of this chart is to give an illustration of the proportionate amount of butter and cheese which Canada sends to Great Britain as compared with other countries. You will see from these figures that Canada's position is a most gratifying one in the cheese column. If we could by any practical means win for ourselves a share of England's market for butter equal to that we have now of England's demand for cheese, we should have about thirty-two millions of dollars for exports of butter in addition to about fifteen millions of dollars for exports of cheese. The butter is the more valuable market in every way.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. What our farmers need is to make as much butter as they do cheese? A. I think more. The market for cheese is now pretty well taken up.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. Are not the United States and these other countries likely to be formidable competitors in supplying butter? A. Nearly all the nations with which we compete are doing their level best to get the best information before their people, how best to produce and how best to market their products. Undoubtedly we shall have to face the keenest competition.

*By Mr. McDonald (Assiniboia) :*

Q. Can they make as good butter from the coarse grasses of the North-west as from the sweet grasses of Ontario? A. Quite as good in flavour. The butter of Manitoba and the North-west is likely to keep longer than Ontario-made butter under the same circumstances. Butter deteriorates mainly from one of two causes, or rather by one original cause, that is by the process of fermentation, modified by conditions of temperature and moisture. The fermentation is started from germs that get into the milk or cream from the atmosphere. The atmosphere of that part of Canada is freer from those germs than the more thickly settled portion of the country.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. When, therefore, the North-west becomes more densely settled would not the effect be the same? A. It might.

*By Mr. Boyd :*

Q. I am surprised at Dr. McDonald asking such a question. Surely he ought to know that the prairie flowers, the pea vines, and the luxuriant grasses that grow on the prairies of Manitoba and the North-west are far superior to those which grow in the east. A. This, I may say in addition; the cool nights in the west, leave the butter more wax in body in summer. I have a chart here\* to illustrate the comparative prices obtained in Great Britain for butter in 1894. The upper line represents the prices obtained during the several months of the year for Normandy and Brittany butter from France. The lower line shows the prices obtained for the finest Danish, Swedish and Kiel during the same months in the year.

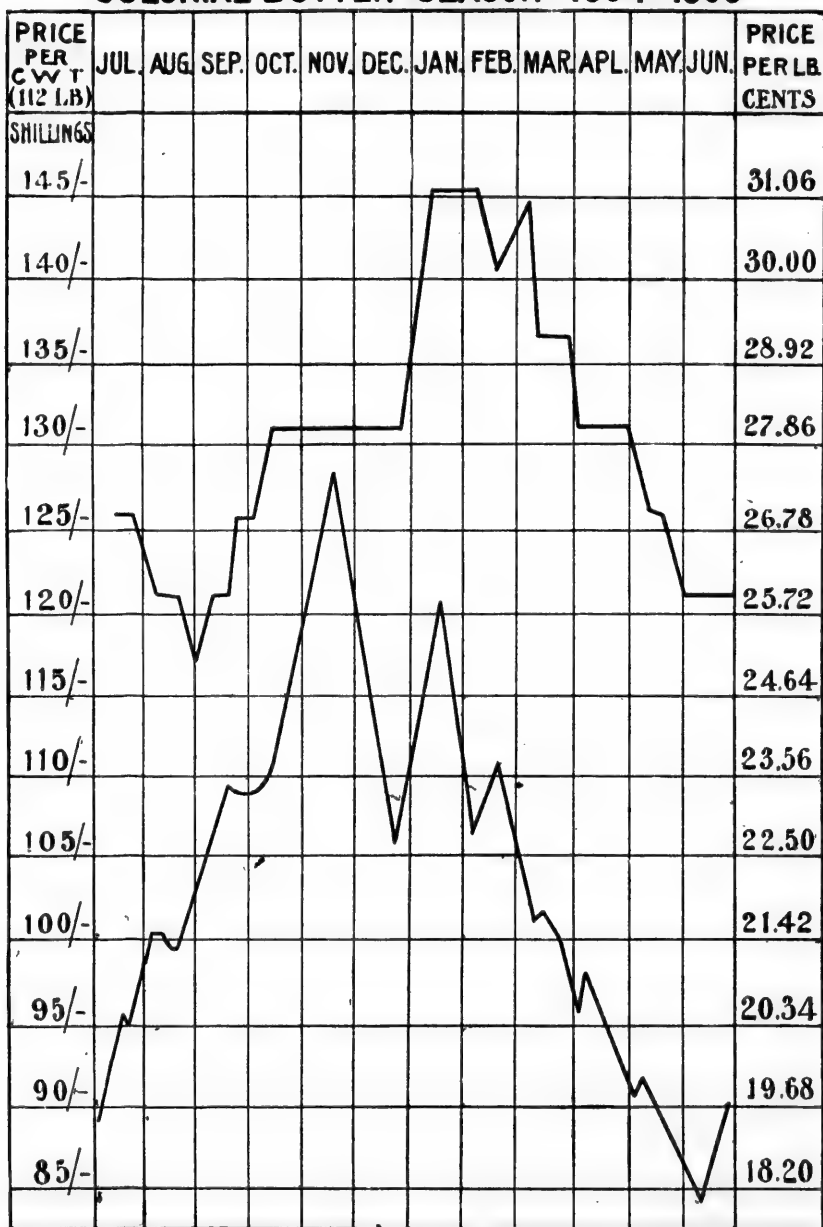
*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. It varies a good deal?—A. Yes; you will perceive that the price is higher from October to March than from March to October. What this chart illustrates has been repeated annually for the last 15 years. It is not any mere temporary incident that the price of butter was higher from November to March in 1894-5 than during other months. That is why I have been advocating for the last eight or nine years the need for Canadian creamery men—not to speculate in butter but—to provide cold storage

\*N.B.—See next page.



# COLONIAL BUTTER SEASON 1894-1895



\* NOTE:—The upper line denotes the prices obtained in Great Britain for Normandy and Brittany butter: the lower line denotes the prices for finest Danish, Swedish and Kiel butter during the several months of the year.

accommodation for the holding of butter made in June, July and August, until at least October or November, in such a way as not to spoil the quality, and then to get it into the market when the prices are best.

Q. What is about the average for 15 years?—A. The annual average price of Danish butter f.o.b. at Copenhagen for the last fifteen years is given at 135 shillings per cwt. in 1880, to 93 shillings per cwt. in 1894.

Q. How much a lb. is that?—A. From about 29 cents per lb. in 1880 to 20 cents. per lb. in 1894.

*By Dr. Roope :*

Q. Why should there be the drop from February and March?—A. Because shortly after that is the beginning of the production of the English home dairies. The butter market is an elastic market; prices fluctuate a good deal. This chart shows the trend of them.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. The fluctuation is in the season?—A. Yes; with a gradual downward tendency for the 15 years, although the price was fairly constant from 1886 to 1893, at about 107 shillings per cwt. at Copenhagen. That is equal to about 23 cents per lb. there.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. Every year a little less?—A. On the average; yes.

#### PRESERVATION OF BUTTER BY COLD STORAGE.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. Have Canadians been successful in keeping butter and placing it on the market in good condition?—A. Not until this year, because we have not had the requisite cold storage accommodation. It is not practicable to keep it without some injury unless we have a temperature as low as 32 degrees Fahr. Any butter kept in ordinary cellars or refrigerators will spoil slightly, and thus in the past we have got a bad name. If the creamery men will not provide accommodation at the several creameries, it will pay them to ship the butter to a central refrigerating warehouse every week.

*By Mr. Grieve :*

Q. Is there anything in the report that butter kept in cold storage for any length of time deteriorates very rapidly after being taken out?—A. No; I think not. Let me make that clear. It is an important point. You have three forms of ordinary substances, the gaseous, liquid and solid. As typical ones I may mention steam, water and ice. There are the vapour of butter, melted butter, and butter. I want to make that clear. You can freeze butter that is known as butter commercially; but the butter-fat does not get frozen. There is mixed with the butter-fat in butter, a percentage of water usually in the form of brine. In salt butter this brine does not freeze till very near zero Fahr. If that temperature is reached and the brine is frozen, it of course affects the butter by expansion; and when the brine is thawed the butter is likely to spoil quickly by the penetration of air through the opening of the grain of the butter caused by the expansion of the brine. But butter can be kept below freezing point, which is of course a long way above zero, Fahr. without being frozen or running any risk of being spoiled quickly when taken out of the refrigerator.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. But butter kept in a refrigerator and then exposed on the counter of a grocery store will deteriorate very quickly will it not?—A. Not in consequence of having been kept cold unless the temperature has been a long way below freezing point and the brine has been frozen in the way I have explained.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. Will butter manufactured in June, and kept in cold storage till October be in equally as good condition as butter made in October, and shipped as soon as it is made?—A. It will commercially go on the market in as good condition, if put into cold storage within two or three days after it is made. If it is kept even a week without cold storage it partly spoils; but if it is kept in a dark and cold storage from within two days of the date of manufacture, it will keep perfectly.

*By Mr. Rooms :*

Q. Do you think, if those conditions are observed, it will be equally as good as absolutely fresh butter?—A. I think so. Of course everybody connected with the trade and engaged in the shipment of butter says: "Let us have fresh-made butter." They have never until very recently had fresh-flavoured butter that was not fresh-made. But now by the cold storage process, we can have fresh-flavoured butter that is not fresh-made.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. You can settle that question as to whether the butter would be equal in quality for sale by having some put in the refrigerator and held, and afterwards compared with the product of the same factory in a later month?—A. There is some difference in the flavour of butter in May and June, and later on in the year, owing to the flavour from the grasses and the length of time during which the cows have been milking.

Great Britain draws her enormous supplies of cattle and beef mainly from the United States and Canada, as the following table shows:—

BRITISH IMPORTS OF BEEF, 1894.

From.	Cattle.	Fresh Beef.	Salted Beef.	Preserved Beef.	Meat Unenumerated.
	No.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.
Canada .....	82,323	.....	2,729	3,672	671
United States .....	381,932	1,775,538	235,120	205,485	34,315
Australasia .....		304,513	3,375	70,602	10,569
Other countries .....	11,185	24,053	1,087	11,297	144,202
Total .....	475,440	2,104,104	242,311	291,056	189,757

We had a rather larger share in 1895 than this table shows. Lest some of you should find a difference when you come to compare this table with the figures that appear in the Canadian Statistical Year Book, I should say that these figures are taken from the British returns, in which the year ends on the 31st December, while our financial year ends on the 30th June. According to the chart Canada sends no fresh beef. I think there was a very small quantity sent during the year, but the English returns show none. I have nothing to say about the salted and preserved meats because I do not think we will send salted beef or preserved beef in any appreciable quantity from Canada. We shall have to confine ourselves to sending either live cattle or fresh beef, or in all likelihood a quantity of both for many years to come. In proposing a plan for opening up a trade in dressed beef, nothing has been contemplated that would even hint at injuring the trade in live cattle. But if Canadians could have an alternative

outlet for cattle and meats, every man who sends live cattle to England would be rather better off by having two markets instead of one available. I do not think the shipments of live cattle from Canada are going to be ended at once by any new plan that may be suggested or put in operation. I offer only a few remarks about our possible competitors in the shipments of live cattle.

## SHIPMENT OF CATTLE FROM AUSTRALIA.

There is no risk of Australia competing successfully with us in shipping live cattle. One shipment was sent from there to Great Britain in 1894, and the facts are:—They went by a steamer called the "Southern Cross." The actual freight charges amounted to about \$39 per head. The charges, including freight, insurance, fodder and attendance, amounted to \$68 per head. The cattle were sold for \$88, leaving only \$20 a head for the animals at the port whence they were shipped. In a shipment of sheep from Australia by the same steamer, the freight alone amounted to \$2.50 per head, and the freight with fodder, attendance and insurance came to \$6 per head.

*By Mr. Macdonald (Huron):*

Q. I heard one of the delegates from Australia at the Intercolonial banquet here, saying that they could provide with a profit bullocks for from \$8 to \$12?—A. Well, that may be, but it is also true that when the expenses are so great as \$68 per head for shipping alive, and the expenses are comparatively low for shipping dressed beef, they will send the beef rather than the live cattle.

Q. Have you any statement regarding the cost of the experiment that was tried of shipments from the Argentine Republic?—A. I have some facts. From the Argentine Republic there were shipped in eight months in 1893, 5,643 head, in 1894, 7,831 head, and in 1895, 25,165 head. The cattle from the Argentine Republic have been found to be of comparatively poor quality, from want of good breeding and good feeding; and they have been sold on the average at from \$1 to \$2.50 per hundred lbs. less than the average of last year's sales of United States and Canadian Cattle.

*By Mr. McGregor:*

Q. They are found to be very wild, and not suitable for domestic purposes?—A. They are not bred or fed for economical killing.

## CHILLED BEEF COMPARED WITH LIVE CATTLE.

*By Mr. Cochrane:*

Q. Could you give us any idea of the difference in price per hundred-weight of refrigerated or chilled beef sent across to the British market?—A. I will give an analysis of that as fully as I can estimate it. At the present time, there are no quotations available for dressed beef from Canada, because we have not yet begun the business. I may say in this connection that the carcasses of cattle from the United States, after being slaughtered, sold on an average for 25 cents a hundred pounds higher than the carcasses of the cattle we sent from Canada. There has been some talk as to why the people in the United States keep on sending so many cattle alive when it is said it does not pay as well as the dressed meat trade would pay. But it must be remembered that the pick of their dressed meat goes into their own markets in the Eastern States, and the beef they send from the United States to Great Britain is not all choice by any means.

*By Mr. Hughes:*

Q. The beef they send dressed?—A. The beef they send dressed. I am informed that the choice beef from the large slaughter houses goes to the cities of the Eastern States, and the remainder goes to Great Britain, where it fetches a lower price. Taking the average for six months ending the 30th June, 1895, I find that the prime or first quality of domestic cattle was sold in London at \$8 per hundred pounds live weight. When I said that at a meeting a few weeks ago, the statement was afterwards disputed

by certain shippers of cattle. My authority was the report of the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States, which said the information was from official sources. This is the statement. The price to the Liverpool buyers of prime domestic cattle was \$7.43 per 100 pounds live weight. At the same time, in those markets, hindquarters of beef sent in refrigerators from the United States sold at from \$10.50 to \$13.50 per 100 pounds wholesale. At Birkenhead and Deptford, whole carcasses, not merely hindquarters, were sold at from \$10 to \$10.75 per 100 pounds. Another statement made in the report of the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States is that the maximum price for chilled beef from the United States has been considerably above the top prices at any time obtainable for beef from American cattle killed upon landing at the abattoirs of either Deptford or Birkenhead. That seems to me to be a very remarkable result, seeing that those shipped alive are the pick of the cattle.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. About what did it cost to ship over per 100 lbs?—A. I will give you an estimate of that in a moment.

*By Mr. McNeill :*

Q. Does that mean after deducting freight?—A. It means the actual selling price wholesale for the dressed beef from the two sources on the markets in Great Britain. I am now making a comparison of the quality of the beef that may result from the different methods of shipment.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. What the English consumer pays?—A. What the English wholesale merchant buys at.

Q. It has nothing to do with the freight at all?—A. Not my statement at the present time.

*By Mr. MacDonald (Assiniboia) :*

Q. The price of the refrigerated beef was above that of the highest price for beef from cattle sent over alive?—A. It brought a higher price when sold by the carcass there.

*By Mr. Macdonald (Huron) :*

Q. What explanation do you give for that condition of things?—A. That the quality of the beef is slightly deteriorated by being shipped alive. The journey affects the quality unfavorably, whereas the quality of the other beef, not so good to start with, is not spoiled in transit.

Q. Rather improved?—A. Rather improved.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. The offal brings more there than here, which makes up for the loss?—A. Yes, in part.

*By Mr. Cochran :*

Q. Would not this fact have something to do with the buyers; when they know there is a cargo of live cattle to be slaughtered, would the matter not be more in their hands than if the meat were refrigerated?—A. No, because as it is now arranged the beef can be refrigerated and kept for a month at the depots.

#### CHILLED BEEF AS COMPARED WITH FROZEN BEEF.

As far as the wholesale men are concerned there is a very decided difference in the price obtained for refrigerated beef and frozen beef. The two are quite different in quality, and the difference is especially shown when the roasts are served up cold. The Australian frozen beef brought from \$6.50 to \$7.00 per 100 lbs., as against \$9.00 to \$11.50 per 100 lbs. for chilled beef.

*By Mr. McDonald (Assiniboia):*

Q. Does frost deteriorate the quality or flavor of beef?—A. It does. The frost seems to rupture the cells and the juices run away when the beef is thawed. The beef also has a somewhat mussy appearance.

Q. The fibre of the beef is separated, that is, one fibre from the other?—A. I think so.

*By Mr. Hughes:*

Q. How do you account for it that fish can be kept frozen and yet it is just as good when you eat it?—A. If one were a connoisseur of the flesh of fish, when it was served cold afterwards I think it would be found to be less firm in texture. Let me make this statement further in connection with the time I have given these figures for, nine months ending 30th September, 1895. Scotch sides were selling in the London market from \$11.25 to \$14.62 per 100 lbs. English sides were selling at \$11.25 to \$12.87½ per 100 lbs. United States and Canadian from \$9.00 to \$11.50 per 100 lbs. of beef. There was thus a very considerable difference amounting to between 2½ and 3 cents per lb., wholesale, between the domestic beef and the imported beef; and the closest examination could not discover any appreciable difference in the prices at which the beef from these different sources was sold retail. The difference disappeared between the wholesale purchase and the retail sale, so that a good deal of the cheaper bought beef called Canadian and United States was retailed afterwards, I am satisfied, as the "best Scotch." That is the general belief in Great Britain among those who have made a study of the question.

#### NET RETURNS FROM CATTLE SHIPPED ALIVE.

I desire to make special reference to the difference between the returns estimated to be obtainable for beef shipped dressed and chilled, and the actual returns on two lots shipped alive last year. I have here with me the account sales of 280 head of cattle. They were not specially selected but came to my hands in the usual course of correspondence. The first lot of 100 head were sold in Liverpool on the 2nd October and the second lot of 180 head on the 5th October. They were good cattle, killed in Liverpool, refrigerated there, and the dressed beef was sold at the highest price obtainable to 30 or 40 different customers; that is, they were jobbed to make the most of the transaction. The lot of 100 head dressed out an average 742 lbs. of beef. The price at which they were sold was \$8.67 per hundred lbs. of dressed beef or a total of \$64.36 per head. The average revenue from the hides was \$5.47 per head, from the offal \$4.51 cents, and from the fat \$1.83.

Q. What do you include in the offal?—A. The guts, liver, lights, and the glue making parts. The total gross revenue, from the figures I have just given was \$76.17 per head. There are certain charges to be deducted from this. Included in these are the freight from Montreal to Liverpool, dock and market dues, the killing and refrigerating expenses, the commission for selling, which taken altogether amount to \$15.43 per head. Deducting these charges of ocean freight, dock and market dues, etc., the net value at Montreal was \$60.74 per head.

*By Mr. Cochrane:*

Q. After they left Montreal?—A. No; that would be the price at Montreal.

Q. Does that cover the charges at Montreal? A. It covered the charges from Montreal outwards except the fodder and attendance on board ship and the insurance.

*By Mr. Grieve:*

Q. What is the average live weight of the animals?—A. I do not happen to have that information.

*By Mr. Boyd :*

Q. What is the average weight dressed ?—A. 742 lbs.

*By Mr. Pridham :*

Q. That would be about 1,300 lbs. live weight ?—A. About that. There is one point that I want to mention. I do not know who paid for the fodder and attendance on board ship. That is not shown in the records.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. The shipper always pays that at Montreal ?—A. I have not included any charge for that in the \$15.43 which I have given for freight, dock and market dues, killing etc. You would therefore have to add to that sum, the cost of fodder and attendance on ship board.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. What would that be ?

MR. McMILLAN—About \$7 per head.—A. I will find out exactly what the amount is, and add it to my evidence, so as to make it clear.\* I have no doubt, however, that Mr. McMillan's statement is correct.

Now, with regard to the other shipment of 180 head, which were sold in Liverpool on October 5th ; the average weight of the animals was 773 lbs. of dressed beef, which sold at \$8.78 per 100 lbs. of beef, making a total of \$67.87 per head. The hides brought \$5.47, on the average, per head, the offal \$4.67, and the fat \$1.62 ; the average gross receipts per head being \$79.63. The average charges for ocean freight, dock charges, killing and refrigerating, commissions, etc., amounted to \$14.96, leaving the net returns at Montreal \$64.67 per head, without deducting the actual cost of fodder and attendance on board ship.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. When the steamship companies carry the animals at so much per head, do not they feed them ?—A. No ; the shipper buys the fodder and pays for the attendants.

The following tabular statement presents these figures in clear form for examination and comparison :—

*Returns as per account sales of 280 cattle sold at Liverpool.*

From 100 cattle sold October 2nd :

Average weight dressed beef, 742 lbs. @ \$8.67 per 100 lbs..	\$64.36
Average per head, hide .....	\$5.47
do do offal .....	4.51
do do fat .....	1.83
	<hr/> 11.81
	<hr/> 76.17
Less—Ocean freight .....	10.11
Dock and market charges .....	2.78
Killing, refrigerating, etc .....	1.33
Commission .....	1.21
	<hr/> 15.43
	<hr/> 60.74
Average per head .....	

NOTE:—The cost for hauling cars at Montreal, loading, wharfage, insurance, feed on board ship, ropes and pails amounted to \$3.88 per head.—J.W.R.

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From 180 cattle sold October 5th :

Average weight dressed beef, 773 lbs. @ \$8.78 per 100 lbs.	\$67.87
Average per head, hide	\$5.47
do do offal	4.67
do do fat	1.62

11.76

79.63

Less—Ocean freight	10.08
Dock and market charges	2.32
Killing, refrigerating, etc.	1.35
Commission	1.21

14.96

Average per head ..... 64.67

Taking the two lots together the averages of 280 cattle are:—

Average weight dressed beef	762 lbs. per head.
Average returns at Montreal	\$63.26 do

#### ESTIMATED RETURNS FROM SHIPMENTS OF CHILLED BEEF.

Based on these two statements of account sales I want to make an estimate of the returns that might be made on 280 head of cattle if killed at Montreal. In doing this I am taking the average weight of beef the same as actually sold at Liverpool, viz. 762 pounds as the average of the two shipments or lots. The weight would be more if the animals had been killed at Montreal, but in the meantime I am taking for Montreal the average as it was in Liverpool. I allow the loss in weight in retailing at 6 per cent. The net weight sold retail would therefore be 716 pounds. Butchers in this country tell me the loss is about 7 per cent. In selling through depots in Great Britain, however, we would sell in larger pieces, and therefore 6 per cent would be a fair allowance for loss in weight by retailing. I estimate that the first cuts making 358 pounds would sell at 8 pence, or 16 cents a pound, or a total of \$57.28. Those who know the British market will agree with me that 8 pence per pound is a low price. Second cuts, 179 pounds, I place at 5 pence or 10 cents per pound, making \$17.90; and third cuts, 179 pounds at 3 pence or 6 cents per pound, making \$10.74, or a total of \$85.92 for the whole carcass, giving an average of \$11.27 per 100 pounds on the weight of the carcass wholesale. Now, I allow for the cost of retailing in this case \$9.72, which gives a net return from the retail shop of \$76.20 per carcass. Deducting the charges at Montreal for killing, refrigerating, cold storage, freight, cold storage at depot in Great Britain (all of which I estimate at \$15, or rather more than the cost of shipping alive and killing at Liverpool), this gives a total of \$61.20 per carcass at Montreal. To this it is necessary to add the value of the hides, offal and fat, which I place at two-thirds of the value that they realize at Liverpool, or a total of \$7.88 per head. That added to \$61.20 gives us a total of \$69.08 as against \$63.26 realized on the average per head for the cattle killed in Liverpool. Then there is \$7 to come off the \$63.26 for fodder and attendants on board ship, which would make a difference of about \$13 per head in favour of the killing on this side, without reckoning anything for the saving we would have by the less shrinkages in weight and the saving we would have in the ocean freight charges for the dressed beef, the carriage of which would be cheaper than the estimate I have made. The saving in freight and the less shrinkage in weight might amount to at least \$3.00 per head. Then, I have made another calculation of the estimated return from 280 head of cattle if killed at Montreal. The following table shows the estimated returns from 280 head of cattle if slaughtered at Montreal instead of being shipped alive to Liverpool as they actually were.



The average weight of beef as actually sold wholesale at Liverpool was 762 lbs. per carcass. Allowing 6 per cent for loss of weight in retailing, the net weight realized upon by retail sales would be 716 lbs. per carcass. Estimated to be sold:

First-class cuts — 358 lbs. at 18 cents.....	\$ 64 44
Second-class cuts — 179 lbs. at 12 cents.....	21 48
Third-class cuts — 179 lbs. at 8 cents.....	14 32
Total .....	\$100 24
Less expenses and profit of retailer at $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents per lb.....	\$11 43
Expenses slaughtering, refrigerating, chilling, freight, cold storage, etc., at.....	15 00
	\$26 43
Net returns at Montreal for beef per carcass.....	\$73 81
Add, revenue from hide, offal and fat at two-thirds the actual value at Liverpool .....	7 88
Total .....	\$81 69

This shows a total revenue at Montreal of \$81.69 per head as against \$63.26 per head actually realized, a difference of \$18.43 in favour of killing at Montreal and shipping chilled beef, if the prices mentioned can be realized.

In this comparison I have claimed nothing for the saving of shrinkage in weight of the live animals during the passage from Montreal to Liverpool and nothing for the expenses for fodder and attendance on board ship during the voyage. Every penny a lb. that can be added to the retail price I have mentioned, is equal to \$14.32 per carcass of wholesale weight of 762 lbs., so that, if you can put one penny a lb. on these prices which I have quoted, you would have an additional revenue of \$14.32 per carcass of that weight.

*By Mr. Hughes :*

Q. I understand these prices are low for retail prices in England. I suppose you have erred on the right side in every element you have taken into calculation?—A. I think so.

*By Mr. McNeill :*

Q. Don't you think about a shilling a lb. is nearer the actual retail price in England for the first cuts?—A. I dare say it is.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. Have you no scheme whereby you could put the Canadian beef on the market alongside with the Scotch beef and in the same condition?—A. Yes, that is the object of a plan I am about to explain for shipping dressed meat from Montreal to Great Britain, but as it is now after twelve o'clock, I had perhaps better defer it to the next meeting.

COMMITTEE ROOM 46, HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
FRIDAY, 21st February, 1896.

The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization met this day at 10.30 o'clock, a.m., Mr. Sproule, Chairman, presiding.

Mr. Jas. W. ROBERTSON, Agricultural and Dairy Commissioner was present by recall and addressed the Committee as follows:—

MR. CHAIRMAN and GENTLEMEN.—In accordance with the permission for which I asked yesterday I shall read a statement of the plan proposed for opening up a trade in dressed meat with Great Britain. It is similar to the memorandum which was submitted to the Government on the subject.

To give stability to the profits from farms, and thus to insure prosperity to the whole country, it is necessary that all perishable food products from Canadian farms should secure as good a place relatively in the British markets as has been won by Canadian cheese and creamery butter. Judicious and energetic action by the Government can accomplish as much for beef, mutton, pork, poultry and other food products as has been done for cheese and butter. It is most urgent and desirable that something should be done, particularly for beef, mutton, lamb, and poultry.

FALLING OFF IN NUMBERS OF CATTLE EXPORTED FROM ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

There has been a decided falling off in numbers of cattle exported from Ontario and Quebec since 1890. The following table shows the numbers shipped from Canada to Great Britain.

	Cattle.	Sheep.
1890.....	122,182.....	43,780
1891.....	118,947.....	32,157
1892.....	98,755.....	15,932
1893*.....	80,899.....	1,780
1894.....	82,217.....	121,304
1895.....	96,546.....	255,508

The figures from 1890 to 1894 inclusive are for the years ending 30th June, and the figures for 1895 are taken from those published in the *Montreal Gazette*, compiled from the returns of the weekly shipments during the period of navigation. Of the 96,564 cattle shipped in 1895 it is reported that over 40,000 came from Manitoba and the North-west Territories.

ADVANTAGES OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT TO START THE BUSINESS.

Much benefit would result to those engaged in the cattle trade and to the agricultural interests generally by the opening up of a business by which cattle would be slaughtered in Canada, and dressed beef sent direct to the consuming purchasers in Great Britain. There are many transportation and commercial difficulties in the way which no private individual or joint stock company can successfully overcome. The business is one which is urgently and essentially important to the welfare of Canadian farmers, and because the Government can remove or overcome the obstacles to its successful establishment without the expenditure of a large, if any, sum of money, it seems fitting and proper that the Government should take it up.

That this business cannot be inaugurated from Canada by private enterprise is evident from the tremendous disabilities from which the Great United States packers and

\*For ten months only.

shippers backed by millions of dollars have not been able to escape. The government control of this business would win for it a status and name in the United Kingdom, which no private individual or joint stock company could ever secure. The prestige of powerful government administration, joined to the reputation of the government, in having successfully assisted in putting Canadian cheese and butter on the British markets in the best way, would vanquish active hostility from the retail butchers in Great Britain without any commercial struggle involving loss.

The Government would be in a position to select the pick of the cattle at Montreal and would thus prevent any sentiment from being foisted upon the consumers in Great Britain that might lead them to regard the dressed meat trade from Canada as a "Cheap John" affair for the disposal only of beef from inferior cattle which were not fat enough to be shipped alive.

## MARKETING DIFFICULTIES UNDER THE PRESENT METHODS.

### CATTLE JADED AND BEEF INJURED.

1. When Canadian cattle are shipped alive by railway and afterwards by steamship they arrive in Great Britain in a jaded condition. They look their worst, and are about at their worst for killing for beef. Both of these conditions enable the British cattle buyers to beat down the prices. The beef from Canadian cattle when shipped and handled in that way does not reach the consumers in such a condition as to secure the reputation for good quality which it would obtain if the consumers were able to purchase the beef at its best from such cattle as are fed in Canada.

### NOW NO ALTERNATIVE MARKET IN GREAT BRITAIN.

2. Formerly when Canadian cattle could be sent to the interior of Great Britain they could be grazed and fed on grass or succulent fodders on English or Scotch farms for a few weeks. They gained tremendously in weight and recovered quickly in quality. That alternative outlet for Canadian cattle caused relatively higher prices to be obtainable and also gave a steadiness to the price and demand which is now wanting.

Canadian shippers with their cattle at the port where they have been landed, in the United Kingdom, have no alternative but to sell at once or within two weeks at whatever price they can get. If they hold over for even a fortnight the cost of feeding becomes a large expense; and the arrival of fresh shipments by the next steamers gives the buyers an additional argument which they use most effectively in further depressing the market and lowering the prices.

### DIRECT TRADE CONNECTION PREVENTED.

3. As a matter of fact a considerable quantity of the beef from Canadian fed cattle does not reach the British consumers under the name of Canadian beef. Misrepresentations which go on in that practice, work directly and continuously to the injury of the Canadian farmers, and prevent Canadians from establishing the trade connection between the consumers and the producers of Canadian products under their own name, which alone can insure a satisfactory continuity of the demand.

### PROFITS OF MIDDLEMEN TOO LARGE.

4. The buyers of cattle at the landing ports and the retail butchers in Great Britain get more than their proper share of the ultimate price which is paid by the consumers for the beef from Canadian cattle. The enormous profits which they exact, and which mainly come out of the pockets of the Canadian farmers, are little short of extortions.

## DANGER FROM RESTRICTIONS.

5. With the restrictions on the importation of live cattle imposed by the Imperial Government, such a condition of affairs might readily be brought about as would cause irretrievable disaster to the live stock interests of Canada. An alternative means of reaching the consumers with Canadian beef is the only means whereby a safe and elastic outlet can be provided for the increasingly larger numbers of cattle which are being reared and fattened in Canada.

## SMALL SIZED CATTLE.

6. At the present time there is no opening for the exportation of small sized cattle such as are most commonly grown and fattened in the Province of Quebec.

## NO COLD STORAGE SERVICE UNTIL 1895.

7. Dressed beef has not been shipped from Canada hitherto because cold storage service, in warehouses in Montreal and on board ocean steamers, was not provided of an adequate sort for any of our perishable food products until it was taken up by the Government during the last year. A greater measure of success than has attended the cold storage service for the putting of Canadian creamery butter on the British markets can attend the shipments of dressed meats and other perishable food products to Great Britain.

## OBJECTIONS OF SENTIMENT PREVENTED BY GOVERNMENT ACTION.

8. The question of sentiment on the part of the British consumers is a powerful and far reaching factor in determining the way they buy and the prices they pay for the articles of food which they consume. The name "frozen beef," and the stories set agog about the abominations of slaughter houses, etc., are powerful to keep the best class of customers from buying, or from letting it be known that they do buy, anything but the "best English" and "best Scotch" beef.

If beef as good and as cheap as the best English and best Scotch could be obtained from shops or depots in the United Kingdom, under the name of "Canadian" and under the supervision of the Canadian Government for one year as an object lesson, the best class of buyers and consumers in each of the large cities where these depots were placed could be attracted to give preference to the Canadian article. The beef could be sold at prices much lower than the current prices for the best quality of English and Scotch beef, and an ever growing demand could be created at such prices as would leave it possible for Canadian farmers to obtain relatively higher prices than they have been getting during the past few years.

## THE PLAN RECOMMENDED.

## MEATS CHILLED ONLY ARRIVE IN PRIME CONDITION.

9. The prime object should be to put Canadian beef and other meats within the reach of the British consumers in their best condition under their own name, and in such a way as to attract the best class of purchasers to be our permanent customers. In shipments of beef and other meats from Canada it is necessary that they should be chilled only. The distance and time required for shipment are not more than sufficient to permit the beef and other meats to be properly cured, when they would reach the stores or retail depots in the United Kingdom. The meats should be designated "Canadian Beef," "Canadian Mutton," "Canadian Lamb," "Canadian Poultry," etc. When the quality and reputation of Canadian meats under their own name are recognized and established,

Canadian shippers could continue in competition with the producers and sellers of meats from all other countries upon an equal footing, and with a fair chance of securing the best customers, particularly if they could offer better value in better meats at even the same price per pound.

#### RECOMMENDS PURCHASE OF 500 CATTLE PER WEEK.

10. To permit this to be done and as an object lesson to the producers and shippers of animals and meats from Canada, I have the honour to recommend that provision be made for the purchase of about 500 head of cattle per week at the port of Montreal during the shipping season, and that dressed beef from such cattle be sent as "Canadian Beef" to the United Kingdom, and distributed, through retail dépôts, in Bristol, Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Manchester and other cities, in such a way as to secure a recognition of its good qualities.

#### PREPARATION OF BEEF AT MONTREAL.

11. Arrangements can be made for the slaughter of cattle at abattoirs in Montreal. The beef should be covered by distinctively Canadian wrappers of attractive appearance. It should be chilled in cold storage chambers. It should be carried in cold storage compartments, on board the ocean steamships. It should be taken into cold storage chambers at the port of landing, and from there distributed to and through the retail dépôts in the cities mentioned.

#### AGREEMENTS WITH MERCHANTS.

12. The distribution, through the retail shops or dépôts in cities of the United Kingdom, could likely be effected best by making agreements with merchants of good standing, of sufficient means and business ability, to supply them with a certain quantity of beef per week. This would avoid the need for engaging a large number of men as salaried officials.

#### RETAIL PRICES FIXED.

13. The prices at which the different cuts of beef should be sold to the consumers, should be fixed by the Commissioner designated to take charge of the work, on behalf of the Canadian Government. These should be advertised widely and effectively in the several cities, as well as on bulletin boards in the shops.

#### PRICES TO THE MERCHANTS DETERMINED BY RETAIL PRICES.

14. The beef should be supplied to the merchants in the several cities, with whom agreements were made, at such a price per pound for the whole carcase as would be agreed upon from time to time. That price would be based upon and varied according as the rates were varied at which the merchants were authorized to sell the different cuts of beef.

The profits of these merchants would arise from the margin between the amounts realized from the retail sales, at the prices which they were authorized and which they agreed to charge for the different cuts, and the amount which they paid for the beef taken by them from the Government weekly.

#### PAYMENTS BY MERCHANTS.

15. The merchants in the several cities, with whom agreements were made, should be required to pay for the beef weekly, and their payments might take the form of checks or deposits to the credit of the Receiver-General.

## NO DEFINITE NUMBER NEED BE PURCHASED.

16. It should not be made compulsory on the Commissioner in charge to purchase 500 or any other number of cattle every week. The number to be purchased and killed should be left to be regulated from time to time by the activity of the demand and the success of the distribution through the retail dépôts in Great Britain.

## MAXIMUM OF ESTIMATED NET COST TO GOVERNMENT.

17. The actual net cost to the Government for the management of the whole business, would depend upon the prices which may prevail in Canada for cattle during the season of 1896. If prices in Canada be relatively low, compared with former years (which would be most unfortunate), the whole business could likely be managed without any cost, loss or charge to the Government and show a profit; but in case the prices of Canadian cattle in Canada should be relatively higher in 1896 than in former years (which would be a good thing for the country) a sum up to \$30,000 might be required to meet the expenses which are inseparable from the inauguration of the business at the abattoirs, on board the steamships, at the central dépôt at port of landing, and at the retail dépôts or shops for the distribution of beef and other meats in the United Kingdom.

## ONE YEAR ONLY REQUIRED.

18. The business need not be managed by the Government for longer than one year, after which it would be doubtless carried on by private enterprise.

## APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTORS OF MEATS.

19. The beef shipped under the Government control in 1896 should be inspected and graded. The merchants in the several cities who handle beef would become familiar with the quality and names of the different grades, if more than one grade should be established. After the first year, the Government might appoint "Inspectors of meats for export" at abattoirs at Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and any other place where the business required. The merchants in the several cities of the United Kingdom would then be in a position to purchase by cable or otherwise a given number of carcasses of beef whose qualities would be certified to, by the official inspectors of the Government. This plan would avoid the need for sending the beef or meats forward on consignment and would open up a good demand on a safe basis, from the time when the Government gave up the charge of making the shipments.

## OTHER PERISHABLE FOOD PRODUCTS.

20. A beginning could be made in a trade for the shipment of "Chilled Canadian mutton," "Chilled Canadian lamb," "Chilled Canadian poultry," fresh-laid eggs and fruits, through the same agencies.

21. From the trade in dressed meats would grow up in Canada associated industries, such as, the rendering of tallow, the tanning of hides, the making of glue and others.

## COLD STORAGE REQUIRED FOR CHEESE, OBTAINED WITH LITTLE EXPENSE IN CONNECTION WITH STORAGE FOR MEATS.

22. The cheese trade of Canada has reached proportions as large as seem safe, excepting for the natural growth, which may keep pace with the annual growth of demand from increase of consumers. During the months of July, August and September, a large quantity of cheese shipped from Canada does not arrive at the ports of Great Britain in the best condition, owing to the fact that it has been overheated in the railway cars, or on board the steamships. There is an urgent need for cold storage

on board the steamships, for the protection of our cheese trade. It now meets much keener competition in the British markets than it did a few years ago, and to hold our own, advantage must be taken of ever economical agency for the preservation of the good quality of the product during transportation. Cold storage for cheese could be provided on board the steamships with almost no expense to the Government, in conjunction with the cold storage accommodation for the carriage of dressed meats.

#### EXTENSION OF BUTTER AND BEEF GO WELL TOGETHER.

23. The making of butter in creameries during the winter can be increased very greatly, and the feeding of cattle and swine for beef and pork uses, can be joined to the winter dairying with very great benefit to the farmers. An extension of these two branches of agriculture go well together.

#### EXPORT DEMAND FOR WHOLE YEAR.

24. After the close of navigation at the port of Montreal, the exports of cattle from Canada each year have practically ceased. That has resulted in a great lowering of the prices of fat cattle until the opening of navigation in the spring of the following year. A good export demand for Canadian dressed beef might be maintained during the whole year after a trade is once opened up.

#### BENEFIT TO THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

25. In former years the want of an export outlet for cattle and beef has led to the shipment of surplus beef from the western provinces to the maritime provinces. That has prevented the farmers in those localities from selling their fattened cattle to advantage. A steady and profitable demand, such as would be created by the inauguration of a dressed beef trade from Canada, would take all surplus fattened cattle in the western provinces and Quebec for the United Kingdom, and leave the markets of the maritime provinces comparatively bare and available to the farmers who live adjacent to them.

That is the memorandum as prepared by me. The other page and a half deal with the estimates. That would not come before this Committee, but I suppose will come before the House in the regular way.

#### CATTLE EXPORT CHARGES,—MONTREAL TO LIVERPOOL.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. I was a little astray yesterday in regard to the feed and care of cattle. I find \$4 a head is what it costs?—A. \$4? I am to add to my evidence what the cost was in the cases of the 280 cattle reported on.\*

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. What is that you say?—A. It is in regard to the estimate which Mr. McMillan gave yesterday of the cost on board the steamer for fodder and attendance. It was spoken of yesterday as being \$7 per head ; it actually is, Mr. McMillan says, about \$4 per head.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. I notice in a report in this morning's *Ottawa Citizen* a statement in regard to your address before the Committee, reading :—"On one lot of 100 steers shipped from Montreal, slaughtered in Liverpool and sold there as dressed beef, the freight, commission, &c., amounted to \$15.43 per head. On another shipment of 180 head the expenses averaged \$14.96." The report goes on to say, "These steers, Prof. Robertson claimed, would have netted \$16 more per head at Montreal, if slaughtered there and forwarded as dressed beef," I would ask if this report is correct?—A. The report is correct in substance, but it does not give the details upon which I based the estimate of that extra revenue. It was based upon the retail prices I mentioned.

\*NOTE :—The cost for hauling cars at Montreal, loading, wharfage, insurance, feed on board ship, ropes and pails amounted to \$3.88 per head.—J.W.R.

Q. The report goes further and says that cattle sold at a fair average price for beef in England would have netted \$30 more per head than if shipped alive?—A. That was deduced from certain rates of retail prices for beef which were specified in the Committee yesterday. It was not a saving in freight, but it was chiefly the extra price realized by the retail sales.

Q. Making \$30 per head?—A. Nearly, but it took account of the charge for fodder and attendance at \$7 per head as mentioned yesterday, whereas that was corrected this morning to \$4 per head.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. There was a saving in freight?—A. I did not bring that out yesterday. I estimated the freight on the dressed beef for the purposes of my calculation as given to the Committee, as being the same as the freight on live cattle last year. But the newspaper report took account of my remark that the saving of freight and shrinkage in weight might be \$3.00 per head.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. This freight is only an expenditure between Montreal and Liverpool. You say nothing of the freight on the other side?—A. These are the figures from Montreal outward to Liverpool including freight, insurance, expenses at the lairage, killing, refrigerating and selling expenses in Liverpool.

Q. You cannot do it for \$15 per head?—A. I gave the actual and correct figures from the account sales received for the 280 cattle I mentioned.

Q. Including the steamship freight?—A. Yes, I gave the actual figures in regard to 280 cattle. I got the account sales from Hon. Senator Cochrane.

Q. Then he must have had a very low freight, what was his freight?—A. The freight in bulk for one lot of 100 head of cattle was £207, 16s., that would be £2, 1s., 6d., per head.

Q. That would be about \$10 a head?—A. Yes. The freight on another lot of 180 head of cattle was £373, which would be also a little over £2 per head. These account sales came to me in the course of ordinary correspondence and I merely used them yesterday to illustrate what the actual charges were on these shipments of cattle sold in Liverpool on the 2nd and 5th Oct. 1895.

Q. They were handled more cheaply than is usually the case. We estimate not less than \$5 a head expense over there after they are landed?—A. There can be no objection to having these examined by the Committee in full in order to learn the details.

Q. You say \$10 ahead would be about the freight in the case you spoke of. Then there were nearly \$5 expenses for feed and one thing or another, which makes about \$15, to say nothing of the expenses in lairage and for slaughtering, etc. It is almost impossible to get it done for less than \$19 a head?—A. I included everything in the statement except charges on the steamer for fodder and attendance.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. Is there a great difference between the slaughtered cattle and the live stock?—A. I put the charges for 180 cattle into four divisions. The average for freight \$10.08 per head ; for dock charges, etc., in that group, \$2.32 per head ; for refrigerating, killing, etc. \$1.35 per head ; for commission \$1.21 per head ; making average expenses \$14.96 per head.

*By Mr. Smith :*

Q. Have you a statement of what is intended to be done with fresh pork?—A. I am coming to that in a moment.



*By the Chairman :*

Q. You spoke of 500 cattle per week. Would that be for a certain number of weeks in the summer or for summer and winter both?—A. For as long as the supply could be obtained.

Q. You have the estimates there?—A. We would take about one-tenth of the cattle going through Montreal in the summer time. The total export last summer was about 5,000 head per week. Let me offer a few explanations that may save some questions, although I am willing to answer as many of them as I can. If the business is gone on with, I propose to have the cattle bought openly and publicly in Montreal, and to have a statement published every week in two leading papers in Montreal, giving the names of the men from whom the cattle were bought, the number of cattle bought, their weight and the prices paid. The information would be open to everybody and prevent any possibility of favouritism being shown in buying cattle from any individual.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. Could you carry on the business from Montreal during the winter?—A. Not yet; want of cattle would be the draw back.

Q. And suppose you had the cattle they would have to be reshipped into the cars in Montreal. There would be no vessels to put them into?—A. My opinion on this is that there would be abattoirs after the first year at Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal and Quebec, and from each of these places the dressed beef would be shipped in refrigerator cars to St. John, N.B., or some other port. That is for the winter service.

Q. The attempt was made nine years ago or so to send beef to England and refrigerators were put into some vessels. The companies, however, found it did not pay them and took the refrigerators out. Will the people sending the meat now put in the refrigerators themselves? A. I know some of the steamship companies put in excellent refrigerating plants several years ago and took them out again because it did not pay. I think it was because the accommodation on the steamship was premature. The trade was not ready for it then. Last summer the refrigerating appliances on the ships running from Montreal served the purpose for carrying butter over. The accommodation was not as good as it might have been, had mechanical refrigerators been provided. We could not afford that the first year, and we used ice only; but during the coming year, I understand that one or two of the steamship lines will put in mechanical refrigerating apparatus, which will enable us to ship butter in still better condition.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. That is dry cold air?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. Have you figured out the difference in the cost of shipping the dressed meat and the live animals? There should be a great advantage in shipping the dead meat from Calgary and western points as compared with the live stock?—A. After the business is established I think there will be a clean saving of at least one third on the expenses of the shipment.

*By Mr. McDonald (Asa.) :*

Q. How will it affect the transportation companies?—A. The railroad and steamship companies will make as much money because they will be carrying these carcasses for less outlay. For instance, there will be less expense for fuel. The increase in the business will be so great that it will be better for them, as more high class freight will go forward. There are one or two other matters that I might mention in this connection. I have suggested that the cattle might be killed in abattoirs in Montreal. I have already received communications from the company owning the abattoirs at Montreal

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offering to kill the animals at a reasonable rate per head; to refrigerate the carcasses and to put them on board the steamships. It is not proposed that the Government should invest any money in buildings except, perhaps in the direction of supplying some of the fittings for the retail depots in Great Britain. I think the business could be managed entirely without the Government owning the premises or incurring any expenditure in that way.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. The Government would not be liable for any permanent expenditure?—A. No.

#### NEW ABATTOIRS TO BE PROVIDED.

I do not say it disparagingly, by any means, but the abattoirs at Montreal are rather unsightly, and they are not very conveniently situated for the export trade. The Abattoirs Company have written me saying that if they know soon that this business will be gone on with, they are prepared to put up, at their own expense, new abattoirs large enough to handle the business which I have mentioned. They will charge no more for the killing and refrigerating than they charge for the best work they do now.

Q. What accommodation is there now?—A. The accommodation is large enough, but the buildings are old and somewhat unsightly. My fear is that this business, if once inaugurated, would meet with the keenest hostility from the English butchers. They would leave no stone unturned to prevent our getting a footing in England; and if the present abattoirs were used, our rivals would not hesitate to have them photographed and scattered broadcast throughout Great Britain. In this way they might create a prejudice against the business which it would not be easy to overcome. Recognizing the force of this reason, the Abattoirs Company say they are prepared to put up new buildings and undertake the expense attendant thereupon. The charge they stipulate for is 60 cents per head for killing and dressing; they now charge 50 cents, and 60 cents per head for the best work; the charge is to be 15 cents a carcass for the first week for refrigerating.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. Does that charge of 60 cents give them the offal?—A. Yes, as they get it now. It does not give them the hide nor the tallow, but it gives them those parts not used for food.

#### WRAPPERS FOR THE MEATS.

Then it is proposed to get distinctively Canadian wrappers for the meats. Such beef as I have seen going forward from other countries has been put up in unsightly and cheap canvas, so that a good deal of the meat looks mussy and nasty when it arrives at the retail shops. I propose that we should put up our beef in strong canvas, as strong even as duck if need be, with the word, "Canadian" stamped on it.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. What would it likely cost?—A. I have an estimate of the cost from one of the mills and it might come as high as 75 cents a carcass. The suggestion has been made that the cover should be of filled cloth, so that stains would not show through it and thereby render the sides unsightly.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. It would be practically air tight?—A. The seams would not be air tight. Precautions of this kind would involve expense that might be regarded as unusual. We might expend \$1.50 on each carcass in order to make the sides look attractive; but I am satisfied that it is to our interests to present the meat in an attractive form for every body who may see it when it lands.

Q. Would not rough canvas do?—A. I fear the rough canvas that I have seen is of such a character that it would be objectionable and unserviceable. It catches all kinds of dirt on the surface, and looks mussy.

*By Mr. Innes :*

Q. Quite a large trade has been done from my section in dead meat. The proposal, therefore, to open up this trade cannot be regarded as new?—A. Oh, no. The only thing that is new is to try and reach the consumers on the other side of the Atlantic through the proposed retail depots, and also the refrigeration by mechanical means in steamships from Canadian ports.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. Have you investigated the American system of shipping dead meat?—A. Yes, but not as thoroughly as I would like. During the next few weeks, however, I propose to see something more of it. I know their general methods, but I have not been able to make as complete an examination as I would wish.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. Is their meat sold to commission merchants?—A. No ; some of the firms have their own depots in Great Britain. One firm alone is said to have over 80 depots from which they sell the beef. They are still labouring, however, under this disadvantage, the British people suppose that the beef coming from Chicago is not as good as the "best Scotch" or the "best English." These firms, therefore, get a class of customers that buy a lower grade of beef than that sold under the name "best Scotch."

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. I may say that I have eaten as good American beef in Scotland as I ever ate in my life.—A. I am satisfied that some excellent beef is sent over.

Q. I think the slaughtering of all the western cattle should be done in the West. If that were arranged, it would give the Ontario farmers a better rate of freight for live cattle?—A. According to the knowledge which I have, the jading and bruising of the animals occur mainly on the railway journey, and yet I have not been able to free myself from the impressions made on my mind on two occasions in crossing the Atlantic on steamships which had cattle on board. We had rough weather, I saw the cattle four or five times and they suffered very much. I am inclined to believe that these rough passages were not characteristic of what usually happens.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. The distillers claim that the cattle gain all the way over during the voyage?—A. No doubt they may in the summer time ; or at any time with a smooth passage, I dare say they would.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. The first time I went over with 60 head of cattle of ours, there were other two lots for which \$2 per head were offered at Montreal more than for mine. But when mine were put on the market there they averaged \$5 more a head than those for which more was offered at Montreal.—A. I went on board a steamship not many weeks ago to see the cattle at St. John, N.B., and in conversation with some men who had been in that business I learned that a loss of five, six and eight dollars per head was common, when there was not some one interested in the cattle with them all the time to see that the feeding was regular and that the cattle were well cared for.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. That is the great secret of success in the trade, having them well cared for. If not you lose all your profits and more too?—A. Yes.

I have not said much about the selling of the meats on the other side. I am confining myself now to beef. I can only speak of the proposals, and they may need to be modified if the business is gone on with, after business conferences are had with the men who are likely to do the selling. We may propose to them certain things and they may decline to go into agreements like that. However, the proposal is that there should not be more than two men on salary in Great Britain. The meats would be sold at the several cities by merchants who know each city and know its trade. The Government might have to fit up the shops to some extent to make them attractive. It is possible a merchant might say: "I would not fit up a shop as you want it for only six months' trade, although I am prepared, if the thing goes on, to take the fittings off your hands at a price." The Commissioner in charge for the Government would have to fix the retail selling prices comparatively low at first; and I think it would be advisable to have a good deal of advertising done through the columns of the newspapers, as news, and not as trade advertising matter.

*By Mr. McGregor:*

Q. You don't propose to go into the retail trade?—A. Yes, to an extent.

*By Mr. Innes:*

Q. If you go into this you will find that the newspapers will not advertise you gratuitously?—A. Well, the newspapers there have already advertised the matter as a thing the Government was doing for the sake of the farmers of this country. For instance, the "Liverpool Courier" has already given a favourable editorial on the subject. The "Scottish Farmer" said, in effect, that the Canadian Government was, of course, looking at the scheme from the point of view of the Canadian farmers, but the action of the Canadian Government would have an effect on the Scotch farmers as well; and since the proposal was to have the produce of Canada sold under its own name, it was likely to do the Old Country farmers good service rather than injury.

Q. Oh, yes, that is generally; but when it comes down to individual cities or towns, you will find it will be different.—A. It will be different, no doubt. What we propose to do is to go to a business man, in Manchester for instance, and say: "If you are inclined to become the representative of the Commissioner for the Canadian Government, to have the exclusive handling of the meat in this city, we will agree to open one, two or three shops, and will agree on retail selling prices, which will be advertised on a bulletin board or tablet in these shops." If the average retail price by the carcass should be 15 cents, then the Government would agree to furnish this man with so many carcasses per week up to 50 or 60, or a number to be agreed upon, at the rate of say 13½ cents per pound wholesale, leaving him 1½ cents per pound for his expenses and profit. We would not be responsible at all for collecting the money from the retail purchasers. He would pay the Government at the wholesale rates agreed upon, and the margin would be his profit. He would not be bound to take any given quantity, and the Government would not be bound to supply him more than the quantity agreed upon. A refrigerator could be fitted into each shop to hold two or three days' supply. Beyond that, meat could be sent from the central refrigerator depot when required. When the demand was good, the Commissioner in England could cable to Montreal to send larger supplies, and, if the demand was slack, he could send word not to send any until further orders. The meat could be kept six weeks without deterioration, and there would be no need to send it out from Montreal until there was a fair prospect of its being required for immediate consumption.

*By Mr. Wilson:*

Q. Is six weeks as long as you could keep it without deterioration?—A. Yes. I think after that it would begin to show a little mustiness, and take a darkened colour outside.

Q. But, so far as flavour goes, do you think it would be all right?—A. I think it would keep for six weeks with improvement.

## PLAN PROPOSED TO PROVIDE LASTING ADVANTAGES.

The object of this proposal for managing the retail part is to avoid a very serious objection, and to achieve a business arrangement which would be permanent in its benefits. It would be almost impossible to administer a Government business in Great Britain, if the men who managed the retail shops were on salaries, and collected the money and paid it into the credit of the government. That would be open to very grave abuses, and would be almost impossible to manage well. I would not recommend the government to put a finger in a pie like that. But if merchants with whom agreements are made take the meat wholesale and collect the money for it, there would be no risk of loss, or pilfering, or mismanagement. Each merchant would pay for the meat week by week, and if the bills were not paid weekly, he would not get any more meat. This would simplify the system, and make it safe. The other object to be gained, and the more important one, would be this. If the government engaged men on salaries, when the government dropped out of the business the business would drop to pieces, so far as getting into direct touch and connection with the consumers was concerned. We would not have laid a foundation upon which a superstructure of permanent trading could be built afterwards. These merchant salesmen with whom agreements are to be made would be men of good repute, ability and means, who would know their business. The government, after the first year, would need to employ an inspector only in Montreal to grade the beef, so that any shipper could have his cattle slaughtered in Montreal at his own charges, under Government inspection. He could then offer to sell 100 or any number of carcasses on that inspection, grade No. 1, 2, or 3, as the quality might be. I expect these merchants, who had begun to sell on behalf of the government in England, would go on buying beef direct from Canada, as others now buy cheese and butter. That is how the proposal, I think, would achieve these two objects.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. Are the Americans acting along that line now?—A. No, some of the companies that slaughter cattle have their own depots in England and sell for themselves. They manage their own business over there in that way. But just because it is Chicago slaughtered beef, they get a class of customers who buy cheaper cuts than the ones we would expect to get.

*By Mr. Innes :*

Q. Do you propose to have a wholesale buyer in each place?—A. We propose to have one man in each city and not more than two or three shops in any city.

Q. And the retailers would buy at their own risks?—A. Yes, only in this way, that the retail prices which the merchants, with whom agreements are made by the Government, must sell, are to be fixed by the Canadian Commissioner. If it was advantageous to drop the price 1, 2 or 3 cents per pound retail, we would do so, and the price at which the merchant was charged by the Government for the meat would be dropped accordingly.

Q. At the end of the week if any remained over he would have the responsibility of disposing of it.—A. Yes, but he would not be required to buy any quantity per week more than he could dispose of.

We would let him buy as little as he could sell. Supposing we had arranged to sell up to 500 a week over there, and in one week all these merchants had not sold more than 300, we would still have 200 in hand at the central refrigerator depot, and would cable at once to Montreal to kill only 300 the next week. We would always have enough on hand to make supply elastic.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. I am afraid it would be almost impossible to fix the price at which they would sell, because whenever they had a settled quantity, and the meat would be a certain time on their hands they would reduce the price in order to get rid of it?—A. No

merchant in any city would be required to have more than three days' supply on hand and there could be no objection to his selling the beef as low as he liked, only he must not charge higher than the prices fixed by the Commissioner.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. He would only require the best cuts?—A. He would require three classes of cuts, I think. The beef would be cut up in three classes, first, second and third. A large proportion, or about one half of the carcase, would sell as first class, a quarter of the carcase as second, and the remainder as third class.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. You could not always depend on getting the maximum price?—A. If the retailer wanted to sell cheaper we could not help that. The object is this mainly : We furnish these men in the several cities with the very best class of beef. Supposing the very best English and Scotch cuts were selling in the same city at a shilling a pound, if the merchant could charge a shilling a pound retail for Canadian beef, and buy it from us at a very great deal less, he would be taking all the profit, and we would not be getting consuming customers to know the relative cheapness of Canadian beef. The object is to get customers to these shops at retail prices that we can afford to sell at without any loss.

Q. Good butchers might come and buy a lot of our best cuts when the price was low and take them to their own shops?—A. I fear we could not prevent that, although there is before the Imperial authorities a proposal to make it a misdemeanour to label, brand or sell any imported meats as the best English and the best Scotch.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. I think there is a scheme on foot to have all those who sell foreign meats in the English markets licensed?—A. I would favour that as being a good thing. I am quite willing to admit there are many difficulties in the way, and it is because there are difficulties that the Government should undertake the business, no private concern having been able to surmount those difficulties so far.

*By Mr. Innes :*

Q. The difficulty is in carrying out the details?—A. Yes ; there are lots of difficulties. I may say that, after all, while every thing has been considered as far as I have discussed this business with the shippers of meats and butchers, there will doubtless be need of modifying the plan as circumstances arise and have to be met.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. How far have the arrangements been made already ? What do you propose in the outline that has been drawn up?—A. No definite business arrangements have been made. I have merely been authorized to make inquiries as to what arrangements could be made. No agreements can be made and no expenditure can be incurred until the money has been voted by Parliament for the purpose. The whole plan has been submitted, information obtained, and propositions made to several firms, inquiring whether they could carry out what it was proposed to do in case Parliament sanctioned the plan and voted the money.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. Would the sale of this meat in the different cities in the old country not be influenced more or less by the sale of live cattle that are sent there during the week?—A. I think to a very limited extent. I think that no more than one quarter of the dressed beef from Canadian cattle that are sent alive is ultimately sold as Canadian beef. The rest goes as the best English and best Scotch.

Q. Last year we shipped one lot of cattle, the average was 1,400 lbs, and we had \$75 per head at our own door. Two weeks after we sent over another lot, and we did not get \$60 per head although they were not 30 pounds lighter. I mention this because I am afraid it will be impossible to settle the price of the slaughtered meat while the price fluctuates so much, of the live animals which were being sold in the British markets.

*By Mr. Wilson :*

Q. The Commissioner in England would look after that?—A. By cable correspondence and otherwise.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. But the retail trade does not fluctuate so quickly?—A. I find these fluctuations to be unaccountable. I think the buyers on the other side use all kinds of unfavourable conditions to force the price of live cattle down, and if there was an alternative market in Montreal for these cattle, and the men over there knew they could be sold in Montreal as well as shipped alive, a dull market would not come so readily in either Deptford or Birkenhead after the first year.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. I suppose you could not give any definite information when this would be announced, or the arrangements would be completed, so the public might be informed?—A. That lies with the Government and Parliament. The proposal asks the Government to put in the estimates the sum of \$300,000 for this purpose. This sum is asked for not to be spent for the maintenance, but in order that there should be sufficient funds available to purchase about 500 head of cattle a week for eight weeks, that being the possible time before the returns from the cattle will be available to use over again. That is to say, a credit of \$300,000 is asked for, with a limitation of loss or cost for maintenance of \$30,000. My own impression is that the whole plan could be carried through without any loss at all.

*By Mr. Roome :*

Q. Three hundred thousand dollars would be sufficient to form a credit to carry that on?—A. I think so. There might be expense of \$40,000 a week for actual purchase of cattle and other expenses.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. Where would you purchase your cattle?—A. In Montreal, for the first year.

Q. From buyers who brought them in?—A. Yes. I think the business could be financed with a capital available for six weeks, but there might be a time in the season when it would be advisable to send over 800 head of cattle per week. We count on two weeks in Montreal, not usually you know, but we might need that. I think it would be desirable to have the meat thoroughly cooled and chilled. Then we might count on two weeks on the ocean.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. Then you want your cattle cool and the fever reduced before killing?—A. Yes; and then we might count on two weeks on the other side before the returns were available to use over again.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. You cannot count on less than ten or twelve days on the ocean?—A. It was thought safer to have provision made for eight weeks; and if the money was returned more quickly of course the vote would not be called upon.

*By Mr. Roome :*

Q. Have you anything to say with regard to pork and mutton ?—A. Yes, I propose to show a chart indicating the other two branches of the meat business.

*By Mr. Boyd :*

Q. Do I understand you to say you do not intend to purchase in any other place but Montreal for the first year ?—A. For the first year the killing would be done in Montreal and the purchasing could be done there as required. After the first year, with the Government inspection, I think abattoirs would be in operation in six or seven places. The business would then be done by private commercial enterprise, and not by the Government. The Government would appoint inspectors to grade the quality.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. This last fall all the best cattle that arrived in Montreal came from the Northwest. It would be a great advantage if the Government could have these cattle slaughtered in the west instead of at Montreal. The colour of the meat would be much better ?—A. Some of the larger firms interested in cattle out there have already discussed the desirability of slaughtering at Calgary, and I said that if the plan were gone on with, and I were intrusted with the management of the details, I would not offer any objection to a train load coming down for trial. Some of the firms have offered to sell two or three train loads of cattle from the ranches, to be killed at Montreal, and to send similar cattle alive to Liverpool, through the usual channels, in order to discover what difference there would be in the returns from them.

#### BRITISH IMPORTS OF SHEEP.

The following table shows the number of sheep and lambs and the quantity of their products imported into Great Britain in 1894 :—

From	Sheep and Lambs.	Mutton, Fresh.	Mutton, Preserved.	Preserved Meats, other than Beef and Mutton.
	No.	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
Canada.....	135,622		1,258	2,320
United States.....	198,139	23,121	3,626	68,394
Denmark.....	65,439			
Argentine Republic.....	73,446	585,729		
Australasia.....		1,439,502	106,619	43,965
Other countries.....	11,952	246,714	1,425	35,703
Total.....	484,597	2,295,066	112,928	150,382

Looking at the imports of Great Britain we find that of the sheep and lambs, Canada, in 1894, sent 135,622 head. The number was greatly increased during the past year with the result that there has arisen an agitation against the trade, and it is complained that Canadian sheep suffer from scab. If our sheep and lambs could be sent into Great Britain in the dressed meat form, I think it would be much better. It would cost less for carriage and yield better returns at the port of shipment. To that chart I may add one remark, that the home supply of all meats that the English consumers buy is the main source of supply.



## FOODS CONSUMED PER HEAD IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Of beef the annual consumption is estimated at 65½ pounds per head of the population. The following table will illustrate the point I desire to make. It is the estimated consumption per head of population in the United Kingdom for the year 1892:—

	Lbs. Consumed per Head.	Lbs. Imported per Head.	Lbs. Home Products, per Head.
Beef.....	65·7	15·4	50·3
Mutton.....	28·3	5·4	22·9
Pig meat.....	28·6	14·3	14·3
Other meats.....	2·2	2·2	
Butter.....	15·0	9·5	5·5
Cheese.....	13·5	5·5	8·0

The prices obtainable in Canada for cheese are largely determined by the output of cheese from the dairies of England and Scotland, where it is estimated they make 8 lbs. for every 5½ lbs. imported from other countries.

To revert to this mutton business for a moment. This diagram will illustrate the relative prices obtained for the best Scotch mutton. The red line shows that the prices range from 5s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. per 8 lbs. That line indicates the fluctuations for the six years. New Zealand lamb or mutton is represented by the black line, and it fetches not very much more than half the price per pound which is obtained for the best Scotch mutton. Until recently New Zealand mutton has gone into England mainly in the frozen state. It is held that by freezing it, injury is caused to the texture or flavour. With the arrangements which we propose to make for cold storage compartments I see no reason why Canadian mutton could not be sent into the English markets and take a place very near the Scotch mutton. We have done so already with cheese and I do not see why we should not do it with mutton.

*By Mr. McMillan:*

Q. Has there not been a stagnation in the market in Australian mutton? The mutton from there is too heavy and too fat, and our Canadian mutton is generally fat?  
—A. That is in keeping with the whole trend of British tastes. The British people object to any meats that are too fat.

*By Mr. Cochrane:*

Q. Do you think the difference in the price as between Australian and Scotch mutton is due to the fact that the Australian mutton is frozen or it is not so good in quality?—A. I think there are three factors which make the difference. One is that it is frozen; the next, that it is Australian and not the "best Scotch" and the name counts for a great deal; and the third factor, and not the least of the three, is the intrinsic quality of the mutton where originally grown and slaughtered.

*By Mr. McGregor:*

Q. I understand that in Australia they mostly raise the Merino, while with us Southdowns and Shropshires are the principal breeds?—A. Southdowns, Shropshires, Cotswolds, Leicesters, Oxforddowns and Dorsets are the best for us. This chart will show the place where American chilled beef stands as compared with the price of Scotch mutton. It is about one shilling to about one shilling and four pence per stone of 8 lbs., lower than the price of Scotch mutton. This chart is prepared to show everything that is favourable to the Australian and New Zealand trade. It is published under their auspices and shows that American chilled beef for the whole carcase, sells at a higher rate than the Australian or New Zealand frozen beef for the hind quarters only.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. Is the Australian mutton in England sold by wholesale or retail?—A. They have depots there and sell in any quantities, by the carload or down to three or four carcasses. There is no limit so far as I know.

*By Mr. Pridham :*

Q. Is it your intention to try the experiment with sheep and lambs as well as beef?—A. The intention is to start with beef and after a few months or weeks to join on lamb, mutton, poultry and eggs.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. I think there would be a good opening for sheep and lamb because the embargo there has hurt us severely?—A. There could be no objection to adding sheep and lambs; but in going into a business of this kind, it is best to be cautious and not put on too many things at first.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. When you are opening a shop you have got to keep a supply of mutton. If the salesman bought Canadian beef from one place, and English mutton from another, the shop would not be a Canadian shop?—A. I would like to see the plan applied to sheep as soon as possible.

#### SWINE PRODUCTS.

The imports of swine products are enormous and are continually increasing. The following table shows the quantities imported in 1894 :—

From	Pork, Fresh.	Pork, Salted.	Bacon.	Hams.
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
Canada.....		7,702	254,443	50,576
United States.....	4,330	150,186	2,561,203	1,075,270
Denmark.....	2,015	61,360	766,828	1,785
Holland.....	133,526	1,935	23,666	
Sweden.....		1,791	72,641	
Other countries.....	40,503	2,045	10,923	2,153
Total.....	180,383	225,019	3,689,604	1,120,784

This shows the import of swine products into Great Britain. Canada sends no fresh pork, a little salted pork and a considerable quantity of bacon and hams. I would like to say in connection with this chart that last September, the pork packers in Wiltshire, where there are the great packing houses for England, were paying 9½ cents per lb., live weight for swine weighing from 150 to 160 lbs. I know that it is not fair to pick out the high prices, for a high class article with a very limited trade, and try to apply them to the products of the country generally, but it seems to me there is room for opening a fairly large trade by sending fresh pork to the United Kingdom, either to be sold as fresh pork or to be cured over there.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. I thought pigs were always bad sailors?—A. Yes, I would not send them over alive. I would send them over in cold storage. By doing that, you would do two things. You would get the consumers to buy our pork as fresh pork, or you might even get the

packers there, who buy our cured bacon and hams, wash, trim and smoke them, to pay higher prices for the fresh pork.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. How do you figure out  $9\frac{1}{2}$  cents live weight, for dressed meat?—A.  $9\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb. live weight will give about  $11\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb. dressed meat. Pigs shrink about 18 per cent from fattened live weight to the dressed weight.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. But not if they are very fat?—A. These are small hogs of 150 to 160 lbs. Then it was limited to this, that the lard must not be above  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick on the back. Our bacon must certainly be produced both lean and mild to suit the market over there.

*By Mr. McLean :*

Q. May I ask if you have been in correspondence about opening up the depots on the other side?—A. I have received letters from several people offering to take up the business, but without any definite terms being mentioned. The intention is that some one should go over to Britain and make enquiries personally before any arrangements are made.

Q. I suppose you are satisfied it could be done?—A. I think so and without much trouble.

Q. It would have to be managed altogether from the other side as to the supply?—A. As to the distribution, yes.

#### COLD STORAGE FOR CHEESE.

I have mentioned in my memorandum one word about the need for having cold storage for cheese. Last summer I think, three separate shipments of cheese were made in cold storage compartments. These were landed on the other side in so much better condition than with ordinary storage, that the merchants in Montreal who are the largest exporters say that they are quite ready to pay the 5 shillings a ton increased freight rate to get cold storage for cheese on the steamers, that is, cold storage with ventilated compartments through which air would be driven, keeping the temperature at about 40 degrees. The steamship companies say if cold storage compartments are provided for meats they will fit up other compartments and give the cheese men all they want for an extra charge of 5 shillings a ton. It is not expected that this service would cost the Government anything except perhaps an allowance for the space occupied by the partitions. The steamship people will put up the compartments if they are guaranteed against loss on the space occupied; and they say that for the expenses of fitting up the compartments and cooling them 5 shillings a ton would pay them.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. From your knowledge of the business do you think that cheese would be just as good on the retailer's counter if it was kept down to 40 degrees and then exposed to a temperature of say 70 degrees in a shop? Do you think it would be just as good as if it had not been kept in cold storage?—A. Quite as good.

Q. You do not think that after it has been in a refrigerator you have got to dispose of it pretty quickly?—A. The injury to our cheese trade through the lack of refrigeration comes about in this way. There are large shipments in June, July, August and September. When any one cargo arrives in a heated condition on the other side, everybody expects bargains, and a demoralized tone is produced in the market at once. The benefit that would arise from the cold storage would not be so much that it would prevent deterioration in all the shipments as that it would prevent the demoralization of the market, which is always more or less caused by the landing of damaged goods. If only one lot in ten should be injured by overheating on board ship, to the extent

of 2s. 6d. a hundred weight, the loss would be as much as would pay 5s. a ton all around for cold storage service.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. Would you be able to ship the cheese as green, if you put it in cold storage ?  
—A. Not quite in the summer time.

*By Mr. McGregor :*

Q. It ripens after it is shipped ?—A. It ripens now on the voyage to a considerable extent. If it is put on the ship green and the temperature should go up above 65 Fahr., then it is injured. Accommodation on the same steamships could also be provided at almost no extra expense for fruit, by compartments that could be kept cool and be ventilated by the driving of cold air through them. I am very hopeful that if these perishable food products could be put in retail shops in Great Britain for one year, under the name "Canadian," we would get so many customers to know our goods that every man in the trade would share in the profits that would arise from the business.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. Your proposal then would be for the Government to build cold storage warehouses over there ?—A. In Great Britain there are now cold storage warehouses in nearly all the large cities and we would expect to arrange at a fixed rate per week, per cwt. When the Government gave up the business after the first season of operation, there would be no plant or buildings on hand except perhaps the small refrigerating plant in the shops and some fittings to make them attractive.

*By Mr. Cochrane :*

Q. You will have to put a refrigerator in the shops ?—A. Yes ; there would not be need of a refrigerator in the shops of Great Britain to preserve the meat, but I think it would make them a good deal more attractive if the main part of each shop was kept at a temperature of about 40 degrees ; and it would not cost much to have it so with glass partitions. The refrigerating machines are made now to cost comparatively small sums and they do their work efficiently.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. What do you propose to produce the cold, ice or chemicals ?—A. It would be by mechanical refrigeration and by the circulation of chilled dry air. That is said to be the best method of cooling ; and the machinery for that purpose is now being made also in Montreal.

*By Mr. McShane.*

Q. I would like to ask the Dairy Commissioner a question in reference to a statement of his reported in this morning's *Citizen*. He speaks of cattle being shipped to Liverpool and being sold there as dressed beef, the freight, commission etc., amounting to \$15.43 per head. On another shipment of 180 head, the expenses averaged \$14.96. These steers, Professor Robertson claims, would have netted \$16 more per head if slaughtered there and forwarded as dressed beef. How do you make that out Professor Robertson ?

*Several members :*

He has explained that twice.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Perhaps Prof. Robertson could repeat his explanation. So far as I could learn, the explanation he has already given to the Committee was satisfactory.

PROF. ROBERTSON.—The statement in the *Citizen* while substantially the conclusion I reached, does not give the facts, mentioned by me, on which the conclusion was based. I did not intimate that any cattle shipped as dressed beef last year would have netted a higher price than the same cattle shipped alive, if sold through the usual wholesale and retail trades as they now exist. What I did say was, that I had, and I gave, the actual returns for 280 head of cattle shipped alive last year, as shown in the account sales submitted to the Committee; and then I pointed out that if those same cattle, taking the weights as returned in the account sales, had been sold, as I think they could easily be sold, retail, at the prices mentioned, of 8 pence per lb. for the best cuts, and 5 pence per lb. for the second cuts, and 3 pence per lb. for the third cuts, they would have netted that much more in Montreal than was actually realized by the shipments of the live cattle. And, then, I said further that if the dressed beef were sold retail at 9 pence per lb. for the best cuts, 6 pence per lb. for the second best cuts, and 4 pence per lb. for the third cuts, they would then net about \$20 a head more than they actually did net, basing my conclusion upon the possibility of the meat being sold retail at these prices, which, as everybody in the Committee who knows the English trade is aware, are prices lower than prices at which the best beef has been selling during the past year.

To the \$20 were added then \$7 mentioned in the Committee as the cost of fodder and attendance, and the saving of freight charges on the dressed beef estimated at the lowest at \$3 per head. The sum mentioned for fodder and attendance turns out to be \$3 too high, and so the \$30 estimate is to be reduced by that amount. The very gist of the whole thing is this, that the Canadians have not been getting as much for their cattle as they should have been getting, because too large a share of the prices paid by the consuming purchasers has stayed in the tills of the retailers, or the middle men, over in Great Britain. It was to show a means whereby we could get a larger share, our rightful share of that, that I made the calculation I did.

*By Mr. Featherston :*

Q. Without making comparisons of live cattle and dressed cattle going into the wholesale market?—A. Not comparing them as carried on last year, but comparing the returns as obtained last year with the returns that might be expected through retail depots.

*By Mr. McShane :*

Q. Are you aware that within the last four or five years there was hardly one man in the shipping business who has not been almost ruined? Are you aware of the fact that the banks of our province, and of the Dominion, have lost over \$4,000,000?—A. I am aware of two things, from what has been told me. I am aware that shippers of cattle say that they have lost money.

*By Mr. Boyd :*

Q. There are others who have made money?—A. I am aware that the shippers claim that they have lost money. I am also aware of the fact that farmers have been getting lower prices than they should have been getting out of the amounts paid by the consumers of Canadian beef; and so, if the shippers have not been making money, the business has been done by somebody in such a way as to prevent our Canadian farmers from getting their share of the returns from the other side. The fact that the shippers have not been making money and our farmers have been getting less than their rightful share, points to the need of a change in the manner of carrying on the business.

*By Mr. McMillan :*

Q. As a farmer, and one who ships his own cattle, I am under the impression that the shippers have given the farmers all they could give them.—A. You will permit me to make this further explanation. Nothing that I have said in the Committee, or in

advocating the scheme elsewhere, has ever hinted that the shippers of Canadian cattle have been making too much money. This scheme, if put in operation, would help the shippers to make money by giving them an alternative market for cattle. A member of the Imperial Parliament said, in my hearing, that one retail butcher had made a million dollars in five years out of retailing in his many shops American and Canadian beef as the "best English" or "best Scotch." The object of this plan for opening up a trade in dressed beef is that the enormous profits which have been staying over there in the tills of the merchants may come this way, and that the shippers may get their fair share of them.

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Having examined the preceding transcripts of my evidence of the 20th and 21st February, I find them correct.

JAS. W. ROBERTSON,  
*Agricultural and Dairy Commissioner.*